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LAST HOURS,
OR
WORDS AND ACTS OF THE DYING,

BY
Augustine F. Thompson
A. C. THOMPSON,
PASTOR OF THE ELIOT CHURCH, ROXBURY.

Cogita te jam mortuum, quem scis necessitate moriturum.
BERNARD.

BOSTON:
PERKINS & WHIPPLE.
1851.

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PREFACE.

THE parting present of Dr. Rowland Taylor, one of Bonner's victims, to his son, was peculiarly appropriate. It was a work in Latin, containing some of the more celebrated sayings of the early martyrs, which he presented him as his last legacy, when upon the eve of suffering martyrdom himself. That incident suggested to the author what here follows. The desire arose in his mind, under circumstances which need not be detailed, to present something of a similar kind to his own son, to the beloved people to whom he ministers in holy things, and to any others who may choose to accept of it in this public manner.

An illustration of all the varieties of death-bed scenes has not been attempted, nor a perfect classification of those which are cited. In

several instances examples are given which might, with equal propriety, have been placed in some other chapter than the one where they occur. The names of a few individuals will be met with more than once; but this is the case only when they expressed themselves variously during their last hours.

If, in perusing many of the dying expressions which follow, the same enjoyment be experienced by the reader as has been by the author, it will not be slight. May He who is alive forever more, bless these pages to all who read them!

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INTRODUCTION.

SOCRATES defined philosophy as nothing else than "The study of death;" but a greater than Socrates has said, "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." To the ancient philosopher, immortality was at best only a splendid conjecture; it is revelation alone which gives certainty and value to that doctrine. Human life, therefore, when viewed in its relations to the future, has an infinite value, in the eye of the Christian, and death assumes a corresponding solemnity. Many serious thoughts will he give to it, and even a volume devoted to it will not seem superfluous. Extensive works have been written, in former days, upon *Roma Subterranea*—the tombs of martyrs and other Christians buried in the catacombs of ancient Rome; but at the present time there certainly is no less occasion to inquire what lessons may be learned among

the silent realities of the grave. Attention seems to be fixed universally upon the life that now is. The visible and the present appear effectually to shut out of view what is unseen and eternal. Excavations and explorations are indeed carried on; buried cities are brought to light, but curiosity is more occupied with the forms and composition of antiques, than with the character and destiny of a departed population; and among collected relics, urns are less valued than goblets.

Yet even the boisterous enterprise of this age cannot altogether banish the thought of death. The monitions of that event are too frequent and impressive to suffer it to be wholly excluded from the mind. Few can be found who are not sometimes inquisitive, particularly in regard to the circumstances under which their relatives or others leave the world; and especially do the last words of the dying have a peculiar interest. Nor is it friends alone, but others, too, who for a moment are impressed by those brief sentences which close the intercourse of a human being with this world. Whether intrinsically striking or not, such expressions borrow weight and solemnity from the unseen world. Even Montaigne, sceptic as he was, had a peculiar relish for perusing accounts of the last hours of dis-

tinguished men. He wished to make a collection of them in order to observe "their words and actions, and what sort of countenance they put upon it."

It is the honesty of the dying man's expressions to which they are in a great measure indebted for their interest. Seldom has any one sufficient strength of motive or of nerve to act a part when the stern realities of another world begin to press upon him. Hypocrisy dare not look the king of terrors in the face. Hence a man's character, like his last will and testament, is not irrevocably determined till death. Epaminondas replied wisely when asked whether Chabrias, Iphicrates, or he himself were most deserving of esteem,—“You must first see us die, before that question can be answered.”

No doubt exaggerated importance is often attached to death-bed scenes; yet if the conviction were not almost universal that such scenes have a peculiar importance, as indicative of a person's character and destination, should we so frequently meet with attempts at coloring them, either too brightly or too darkly? Infidel biography always attempts to portray a happy, or at least a philosophical death. And those who, without being professed infidels,

scoff at evangelical truth and piety, are not unfrequently given to misrepresentation concerning such as die the death of the righteous. A renunciation of Christian faith and hope is sometimes alledged. Calvin, who died in great peace of mind, is represented by his enemies to have been overwhelmed with despair. Baxter, as is well known, enjoyed throughout his last sickness a full measure of Christian cheerfulness; yet the rumor went abroad that he was painfully harrassed by sceptical doubts. When the Rev. Augustus Toplady was approaching death, the report became current that he had renounced the doctrines of grace—doctrines which he had ably advocated in health; but it was well for the cause of truth that this came to his knowledge in sufficient season to enable him to seal his adherence to that system with his dying breath. Luther, too, was obliged to reply over his own name to a published account of his death, in which he was represented to have been carried away, soul and body, by the devil.

But no man can die ill who has lived well.*
A Scriptural faith and a consistent Christian life may be taken as a sufficient refutation of

*Non polest male mori, qui bene vixerit. — *Augustine.*

all pitiful slanders like the foregoing; while such a faith and such a life are in general the only proper preparation for the great change. Still, a specific reference to that hour, and a desire that in death as in life we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, ought to be distinctly entertained. To die profitably is more than to die happy. "First the battle," said Christopher Fabian; "the victory when I am dead. Every drop of my blood shall preach Christ, and set forth his praise."

The most striking scenes, however, are not always the most useful; nor are we to expect that the last hours of distinguished individuals will, as a matter of course, correspond with their previous career. During the last visit but one of Whitfield to this country, he spent a day or two at Princeton, with the Rev. Dr. Finley. At dinner, Dr. Finley said, "Mr. Whitfield, I hope it will be very long before you are called home, but when that event shall arrive, I should be glad to hear the noble testimony you will bear for God." "You would be disappointed, doctor," said Whitfield, "I shall die silent. It has pleased God to enable me to bear so many testimonies for him during my life, that he will require none from me when I die. No, no; it is your dumb Christians, that have walked in

fear and darkness, and thereby been unable to bear a testimony for God during their lives, that he compels to speak out for him on their death-beds." The manner of Whitfield's death verified his prediction.

One reason why such individuals often say but little in their closing hours, is the repugnance which all truly great and good men feel to everything like ostentation. This feeling was peculiarly strong in the case of Rev. Charles Simeon, although it did not wholly seal his lips. He was evidently not gratified at the thought of even his friends coming around him to disturb the privacy which he had always wished for in his dying hours. "Now I was much hurt," he remarked, "at the scene last night. A scene!—a death-bed scene I abhor from my inmost soul. No," he continued, smiting three times on his breast, "I know I am the chief of sinners, and I hope for nothing but the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, to life eternal; and I shall be, if not the greatest monument of mercy in heaven, yet the very next to it, for I know of no greater." Then after a pause, "I lie adoring the sovereignty of God in choosing such an one, and the mercy of God in pardoning such an one, and the patience of God in bearing with such an one, and the

faithfulness of God in perfecting his work, and performing all his promises to such an one!"

Frequently has there been an involuntary silence. Those who have shed innocent blood have, with good reason, dreaded the dying testimony of their victims; yet the voice of that blood, by its inarticulate eloquence, cries from the ground and the scaffold. Paul Craw, a Bohemian, converted under the ministry of John Huss, was burnt in Scotland, 1431, for infusing the opinions of that reformer into some of the bigoted members of St. Andrew's University. "At his execution," says Knox, "they put a ball of brass in his mouth, to the end that he should not give confession of his faith to the people, neither yet that they should understand the defence which he had against their accusation and condemnation." Christopher Gauderin, in the sixteenth century, remarked to his fellow prisoners, on the morning he was to be executed, "I hope before noon to drink of the wine of the kingdom of heaven." One of the company who suffered with him, as the hangman was gagging him, said, "What! shall we not have liberty, in this our last hour, to praise God with our voice and tongue?" Gauderin continued to comfort him and the rest, till gagged himself.

In many instances such restraints have proved but half successful. Thomas Vatelete, upon hearing his sentence, exclaimed, "Blessed be God, the God of my salvation!" A monk hearing this, and fearing the effect of such exclamations upon the people, procured an order to have him surrounded by horsemen; but Vatelete lifted up his voice, "If you will have it so that I should go to the slaughter as a lamb, not opening my mouth, my cause will yet speak for me." Similar was the case of Giles Meyere of Flanders. During his imprisonment in a deep, dark hole, he exhibited remarkable patience, and so praised God for esteeming him worthy to suffer for his sake, and so comforted those visiting him, that they uniformly left him in tears. At last in the midst of the fagots, though gagged, he was heard distinctly to say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

The emphasis of admonition or encouragement in dying expressions, however feebly uttered, and the emphasis of involuntary silence, cannot fail to impress the mind. The chill of the expiring man's hand is remembered longer than the warmth of his grasp in health. If the spectacle of a sudden or an unhappy death has such power to warn, surely the recital of it can-

not be wholly without effect.* Not a few, upon touching the bones of an Elisha, have come to life again.† How does the calm or triumphant death of the believer sway the feelings of those who survive! How often are they constrained to join with Thomas, "Let us also go, that we may die with him!" Whatever the life may be, the universal prayer is, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

* A distinguished Italian General, witnessing the sudden death of Alphonsus, duke of Ferrara, kneeled down instantly, saying, "And shall not this sight make me religious?"

† 2 Kings, 13: 21.

LAST HOURS.

CHAPTER I.

PREPARED AND WILLING.

Our life is like the hurrying on the eve
Before we start on some long journey bound,
When fit preparing to the last we leave,
Then run to every room the dwelling round,
And sigh that nothing needed can be found ;
Yet go we must as soon as day shall break ;
We snatch an hour's repose, when loud the sound
For our departure calls ; we rise and take
A quick and sad farewell, and go ere well awake.

Wilcox.

TIMELY preparation is the main point. It is not repentance in death, but a life of faith and obedience that is required. A few death-bed sighs do not atone for years of thoughtlessness, and of all the manifestations of human folly, the purpose to live to Satan and die to God, is the most insane.

It was a maxim with Charles V., Between

the activity of life and the day of death there should be an intervening space. But the divine appointment does not usually coincide with that emperor's judgment. If, however, such an interval were guaranteed to all, would it avail? Would any transforming power be found even in such mock obsequies as he arranged for himself long before his departure? Late reforms are not frequent, and are almost always doubtful. A sad proportion of sick-bed Christians who recover, lose their religion with their sickness, and hence *Early prepared and always willing*, should be the aim of every one. Much more rational was the singularity of Bishop Ken, than that of the emperor just named. For many years, in travelling he carried a shroud in his portmanteau—being that, as he often said, which might be wanted as soon as any of his habiliments. But his preparation for death was not limited to the wardrobe; he had long maintained the walk of faith, living as a stranger and pilgrim on the earth, and as not knowing at what hour the wedding garment would be needed.

Matthew Henry says that the famous Mr. Durham of Glasgow was visited in his last sickness by a friend who remarked to him, "Sir, I hope you have so set all in order, that you have

nothing else to do but to die." "I bless God," was his reply, "I have not had that to do these many years." Such a man knows what it is to die daily. Painfully in contrast with him was Chrysaurius. Wealthy, witty, covetous, and licentious, he found himself at length on his death-bed; he fell into a frightful horror, protesting that evil spirits were coming to drag his soul to hell. He shrieked repeatedly, "Give me respite but till the morrow!" and with those words on his tongue expired.

A distinguished general, having been mortally wounded in an engagement, was exhorted to die like a good Christian, and with the same courage he had always shown. He replied, "Gentlemen, and fellow-soldiers! I thank you for all your anxious care about me; but the man who has been enabled to endeavor to live well for four score years past, cannot be necessitated to seek now how to die well for a quarter of an hour. But observe my having been enabled to endeavor to live well, is not the ground of my dependence; my sole dependence is on Jesus Christ. It is by the grace of God through him that I now am what I am." The soldier's life certainly does not favor a suitable preparation for leaving the world; yet is it by no means absolutely incompatible with high

nents in Christian character. In the of his battles Julius Cæsar could find or attending to the motions of the stars, such as war is to be deprecated it does necessarily withdraw all thought from heavenly and divine.

n the camp we will turn to the pulpit. g the worthies of the seventeenth century lev. Thomas Gouge. It was not elo- or authorship that gave him celebrity, ns-deeds. The latter part of his life was d to the religious education of the poor les, for which purpose he constantly set wo-thirds of his estate, amounting to two d pounds a year, in addition to what btained from other sources. By this

eight hundred, and sometimes a thou- digent children were annually instructed herwise aided. No one before him had so much in distributing the Bible and religious books gratuitously, and in fur- g them at easy rates. And how did such leave the world! It was suddenly, yet greatest calmness, saying, "I am willing ; having, I bless God, nothing to do but "

ilar were the last words of Lady Hunt- 1: "My work is done; I have nothing to

do but to go to my Father." A noble work, and well done was hers! When the Indians in 1755, attacked Gnadenhütten in Pennsylvania, a missionary station of the United Brethren, they set fire to the settlement. With the rest, the house of Senseman, one of the missionaries, was burned; but in the midst of the flames his wife was seen standing with folded hands, and was heard to exclaim, "'Tis all well, dear Saviour!" Nearly the last words of President Brown were, "Be quiet; all is well, I believe!"

"All is well!" Who would not covet such a death?—to be able, in the calmness of Christian confidence, to see the last sand dropping, and say, "All is well!" Those words have a grateful sound as they come from the lips of an approving parent. It is the watchman's cheering cry, betokening that God keeps the city. "All is well!" inspirits the mariner in the midnight storm. "Ends all well," winds up the record of every day's propitious sail. But never has that sentence such meaning as when uttered at the termination of an earthly voyage, save when the King of kings shall pronounce, Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord!

CHAPTER II.

DESIRING TO DEPART.

Is thy earthly house distress'd,
Willing to retain its guest?
'Tis not thou, but it, must die—
Fly, celestial tenant, fly!
Burst thy shackles, drop thy clay,
Sweetly breathe thyself away;
Singing, to thy crown remove,
Swift of wing, and fired with love.

Toplady.

AMBROSE wrote a treatise, *On the Advantage of Death*. Twenty reasons for denying Life, is the heading of a chapter in one of Richard Baxter's works. Better still are Mrs. Ratcliffe's *Seven Reasons why I desire to die*. No one but the Christian can intelligently desire to depart. The pagan, whether priest or philosopher, galley-slave or emperor, either struggles with painful misgivings, or else proudly submits himself to a cheerless necessity. "Of all terrible things," said Aristotle, "death is the most dreadful." Carneades as he grew old—and he reached his ninetieth year—betrayed great reluctance to die, and frequently lamented

that the same power which had composed the human frame, could dissolve it. Antisthenes, the founder of the Cynic School, in his last sickness, showed very plainly that he was weary of life, yet equally averse to dying. "Where is the friend," said he to Diogenes, "who can free me from my pain?" Diogenes presented him a dagger, saying, "Let this free you." But Antisthenes replied, "I wish to be freed from pain, not from life." The courtly Maecenas confessed he should prefer to live even under every accumulation of physical calamities; and the emperor Titus, pulling aside the curtains of his bed and looking up to heaven, protested his life was taken from him undeservedly.

It was a few only of the ancients who attained to anything like a real contempt of death, miserable as that attainment was. Then as now, men regarded death as the demoniacs did Christ; "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" They knew nothing of the Angel of the Covenant to whom they could appeal to remove or mitigate the bitterness of that event. The Rabbis maintain that the Angel of Death holds his sword at the head of the sick; the sick man, spying this Angel, opens his mouth from fear, and then from the sword's point those drops fall in, of which one kills him,

the second makes him pale, and the third decomposes and purifies. But Christ has tasted death for every man, and his proclamation is, Verily, verily I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. Every day there are those leaving the world who prove the truth of that, and hence know not what it means to taste the bitterness of death. Life has comparatively no charms for them. Thus was it with Mary, Countess of Warwick, a sister of Robert Boyle. Her piety was more eminent than her birth and connections. One of the weighty sayings which she valued was, "Why are we so fond of that life which begins with a cry, and ends with a groan?" When, towards the close of her course, she was able to withdraw from the bustle of worldly concerns, and renew her preparations for eternity, she did it with more zest than ever a bird clapped its wings upon escaping from the net, or the cage. One of the last sentences she uttered, having turned aside the curtain with her hand, was, "Well, ladies, if I were one hour in heaven, I would not be again with you, as much as I love you."

Simeon Sussickey, a Bohemian martyr, seemed impatient to be gone, saying, "Every moment delays me from entering into the kingdom of Christ." Such impatience is by no

means inconsistent with Christian submission, for a man may be content to live, though desirous to die. Job, Jeremiah and Jonah were each, it is true, at one period of their lives, unsuitably anxious to depart. Theirs, however, was not such impatience as that of Erasmus on his death-bed ; "Lord, Lord, make an end! make an end!"

Paul could say, For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven ; and Peter could say, Looking for, and hastening unto, the coming of the Lord.

When Dr. Samuel Finley was informed by his physician that he could not live many days, he said, "May the Lord bring me near himself! I have been waiting with a Canaan hunger for the promised land. I have often wondered that God should suffer me to live, although I desire death as the hireling pants for the evening shade, yet will I wait all the days of my appointed time." Expecting that each day would be his last, he exclaimed, upon waking up in one instance, "O what a disappointment I have met with! I expected this morning to have been in heaven."

Gellert, the German philosopher and poet, perceiving that his dissolution was near, in-

quired how long he might still have to struggle, and being told, "Perhaps an hour"; "God be praised," he exclaimed, raising his hands with a joyful countenance, "Only one hour!" Then, with a countenance still more serene, he turned upon his side, engaged in prayer, and in the midst of the exercise, fell asleep in Jesus.

Turn now to the heights of Abraham. The accomplished Marquis de Montcalm has been severely wounded. "I am glad of it," he remarks, when told that the wound is mortal; and on learning that he can survive only a few hours, he replies, "So much the better! I shall not then live to see the surrender of Quebec." Or, pass to another part of the same field, where the gallant Wolfe, as he learns that the French are routed, exclaims—and at the same moment fires—"I die happy!"

But we may not place the military hero in the same category with the Christian soldier. The pomp of war is eclipsed by the lustre of the humblest believer's death-bed. Chagrin, and the dread of disaster, are often the secret of a willingness to die. Stoicism, too, boasts of its happy deaths. The disciple of Zeno could always congratulate himself on having within his reach one panacea for all evils, namely, suicide; and indeed, satiety of life is no rare expe-

rience in ancient or modern times. The maxim is by no means a true one, "To die willingly is to die well;"* though willingness be essential to a happy death. And why should not the believer be always more than willing? Why should we be so in love with the turmoils and storms of life! Why not, as the tired traveller longs for home, as the tossed mariner thinks of his desired haven, so we sigh for the rest that remaineth for the people of God—be submissively impatient to be gone?

The venerable Jewell, bishop and reformer, prayed, "Lord, take from me my spirit. Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace. Break off all delays; suffer thy servant to come to thee; command him to be with thee; Lord, receive my spirit!" When one standing by, prayed with tears that if it were God's pleasure, he would restore him to former health, Jewell overhearing this, turned his eyes as if offended, and said to him in the words of Ambrose, "I have not so lived that I am ashamed to live longer; neither do I fear to die, because we have a merciful God. A crown of righteousness is laid up for me; Christ is my righteousness. Father, let thy will be done; thy will, I say,

* Bene mori est libenter mori.

and not my will which is imperfect and depraved. O Lord, confound me not! This is my to-day; this day quickly let me come unto thee; this day let me see the Lord Jesus!"

Few last hours have been like those of John Janeway. A friend observed to him that it might please God to raise him up again, as he had seen many much weaker, who were restored; "And do you think," said he, "to please me by such discourse as this? No, friend, you are much mistaken in me, if you think that the thoughts of life and health and the world are pleasing to me. The world hath quite lost its excellency in my judgment. O how poor and contemptible a thing it is in all its glory, compared with the glory of that invisible world which I now live in the sight of! And as for life, Christ is my life, health and strength; but I know that I shall have another kind of life when I leave this. I tell you it would incomparably more please me, if you should say to me, You are no man for this world; you cannot possibly hold out long; before to-morrow you will be in eternity. I tell you I do so long to be with Christ, that I could be content to be cut in pieces, and to be put to the most exquisite torments, so I might but die, and be with Christ. O how sweet is Jesus! Come, Lord

Jesus, come quickly. Death, do thy worst. Death hath lost its terribleness. Death is nothing; death, I say, is nothing, through grace, to me. I can as easily die as shut mine eyes, or turn my head and sleep. I long to be with Christ, I long to die."

His mother and brothers standing by, he said, "Dear mother, I beseech you, as earnestly as ever I desired anything of you in my life, that you would cheerfully give me up to Christ. I beseech you do not hinder me now I am going to rest and glory. I am afraid of your prayers, lest they will pull one way and mine another. I charge you," said he to his brothers, "do not pray for my life any more; you do me wrong if you do. O the glory, the unspeakable glory that I behold! My heart is full; my heart is full. Christ smiles, and I cannot choose but smile. Can you find it in your hearts to stop me who am now going to the complete and eternal enjoyment of Christ? Would you keep me from my crown? The arms of my blessed Saviour are open to receive me. The angels stand ready to carry my soul into his bosom. O, did you but see what I see, you would all cry out with me, How long, dear Lord! Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

Even so, Lord Jesus! Welcome the mo-

ment of introduction to the Saviour's presence! Much may indeed be learned of him here; yea, more than tongue can tell, when the promised Comforter comes, and teaches all things, and brings all things to remembrance. Yet we now see through a glass darkly. Present to the soul Christ is, but not personally to these longing eyes. Welcome then the event that shall disclose to the immediate, the full, the uninterrupted view, a being so glorious. What facilities for studying the deep things of redemption will then be enjoyed! The imperfections of language will be unknown. Satanic delusions will find no admittance. Isaiah and Daniel can themselves furnish the key to their prophecies. He who saw such visions on the Isle of Patmos will interpret the scroll of the Apocalypse. There will be no topics, no incidents to divert the attention.

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Once presented faultless in his presence, we shall be ever with him, ever near him. It would seem enough to make heaven infinitely desirable if we might but stand, however far, yet only in sight of the great white throne—never permitted to open our lips, or to hear one word from him around whom the

Seraphim crowd—simply allowed to gaze from afar at that being on whose vesture and on whose thigh is the name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. Let infinite goodness but guarantee that our vision shall never grow dim from the effulgence of that fount of glory; that no saint or angel shall ever come between us and our Saviour; it would seem that without venturing to wish for more, we could without weariness or change, stand there on the outskirts of heaven forever and ever. But to think of following the Lamb whithersoever he shall lead; to be on terms of everlasting intimacy with Immanuel—who could have thought it? Death is an unspeakable gain! Speed then the hour of that glorious consummation! Return unto thy rest, O my soul!

CHAPTER III.

JOYFUL.

Spiritus Calvinianus est spiritus melancholicus.

Apollyon's Libel.

ARE you melancholy? Perhaps it is constitutional, perhaps the effect of disease; or thwarted selfishness may have something to do with it. Whatever the cause, you are constantly disposed to invest everything with a sombre hue. The world is all gloom; friends are treacherous; my property is all going or gone; sickness is consuming my strength; no one cares for me; I am a poor deserted being. Is there any profit in brooding thus over real or fancied ills? Is there any magnanimity in dreaming that your case is wholly peculiar, in trying to awaken sympathy by retailing this factitious misery? Why sigh away your existence? Why blot out all the blue from your firmament? Why pall your heavens with those dun clouds, and wrap you in that needless mantle of darkness? Come, and let these suffering saints instruct you. The true Chris-

tian temper,—yes, the genuine spirit of Calvinism, is a cheerful one.

A lady visiting M. Guy de Brez, a French minister, in the castle of Tournay, told him she wondered how he could either eat, drink, or sleep in quiet. “O madame,” he replied, “the good cause for which I suffer, and that inward peace of conscience wherewith God hath endued me, makes me eat and drink with greater content than my enemies can, who seek my life. Yea, so far are my bonds or chains from terrifying me, or breaking off my sleep, that on the contrary, I glory and take delight therein, esteeming them at a higher rate than chains and rings of gold, or any other jewels, of price whatsoever. Yea, when I hear the rattling of my chains, methinks I hear some instrument of music sounding in my ears; not that such an effect comes merely from my chains, but because I am bound therewith for maintaining the truth of the gospel.” When the Provost brought him word that he was to be burnt about six o’clock that day, he thanked him for the good news; and going to the rest of the prisoners, said, “Brethren, I am this day to die for the doctrine of the gospel; now blessed be God; I joy and rejoice therein. I had not thought that God would have done me this

honor. I feel myself replenished with joy more and more, from minute to minute. My God addeth new courage to me, and my heart leapeth for joy within me."

When Kirby, who was burnt during the popish period of the reign of Henry VIII., received sentence of death, he raised his hands, and bowing himself devoutly, said, "Praised be Almighty God!"—and while the executioners were preparing their fagots and straw, as well as after the flames had reached him, his whole deportment corresponded with that exclamation. Olympia Fulvia Morata, an Italian lady of distinction, who became a Protestant, and was obliged to flee her country, after suffering persecution and the loss of all things, expired, saying, "I am wholly full of joy!"

The pious Hervey, closed life, pouring out his soul thus in prayer; "How thankful am I for death! It is the passage to the Lord and Giver of eternal life! O welcome, welcome death! Thou mayest well be reckoned among the treasures of the Christian: to live is Christ, to die is gain! Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!"

Rev. John Tennent, a few moments before he expired, holding his brother William by the

hand, broke out, "Farewell, my brother; farewell father and mother; farewell world, with all thy vain delights. Welcome, God and Father! Welcome, sweet Lord Jesus! Welcome, death! Welcome, eternity! Amen." Then, with a low voice, he said, "Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus!" "Welcome, joy!" was the exclamation of the venerable John Eliot, as he departed to his everlasting reward.

There is joy in the gala day, joy at the marriage feast, joy in the harvest home; the victor has joy; the discoverer of an island or a continent has joy; but what is all such joy to the emotion of a sanctified soul passing with full assurance to the bliss of Paradise? That is eminently the joy, with which a stranger intermeddleth not; it is a well-spring that gushes up into everlasting life.

Poor Talleyrand, possessed of boundless wealth, enjoying lavished honors, the companion and counsellor of kings, himself a prince, wrote these words the day before his death; "Behold eighty-three years passed away! What cares, what agitations! what anxieties! what ill-will! what sad complications! and all without other result, except great fatigue of body and mind, a profound sentiment of discouragement for the future, and disgust of the past!"

No one who has been behind the curtains in the theatre of this showy and vociferous world, need be told, how much of farce pervades the whole of its elaborate gaiety. It is with a most strenuous effort that the crowd conspire to convince one another how exceedingly happy they are, while each is secretly wondering that he is no more successful in convincing himself. A French physician was once consulted by a person subject to the most gloomy fits of melancholy. He advised his patient to mingle in scenes of gaiety, and particularly to frequent the Italian theatre, adding, "If Carline does not expel your gloomy complaint, your case must be desperate indeed." "Alas," said the patient, "I am Carline; and while I divert Paris with mirth, and make them almost die with laughter, I myself am dying with melancholy and chagrin." There were more in the French capital who could appreciate those feelings of Carline in the sick-room, than his acting upon the stage. Yes,

"There's many a smiling eye,
Above a heart of care;
And many a laughing brow
Conceals the writhings of despair."

CHAPTER IV.

INDIFFERENT AND FRIVOLOUS.

Nil igitur mors est, ad nos neque pertinat hilum.

Lucan.

MANY must be materialists who do not avow the fact. It cannot be otherwise than that multitudes regard man as nothing more than a curious piece of clock-work—so much organized matter; and that when the wheels or the organs refuse to do their office, motion ceases forever. “Let us eat, drink and be merry; no resurrection, no retribution;” such are the maxims and creed of thousands.

A modern sceptic defines death to be only the diverting of a few ounces of blood from one channel into another. Petronius Arbiter thought the same. That voluptuous and dissolute poet found he had lost the favor of Nero, his vindictive master. He resolved to end his hopes and fears by a voluntary death, which, however, he was unwilling to have thought by any means precipitant. He opened his veins and then closed them again. This he did more than once; and at intervals conversed with his friends,

not upon serious themes, but in a jocose way; they, in turn, repeating to him songs and verses upon diverting topics. He slept, travelled, rewarded some and punished others of his servants; indeed, affecting to do all the ordinary offices of life, that his death might not seem forced, but accidental.

Levity in their last hours, or else an austere contempt of death, was a great study with the Stoics as well as the Epicureans. The emperor Caligula had a sharp dispute with Caius Julius, and to cut the matter short, "Do not flatter yourself," said he, "for I have ordered you to be put to death." When the officer came with a warrant for the man's immediate execution, he was playing at a game of chess. Caius received the summons with all imaginable indifference, and only desired the centurion to bear witness after his death, that he had the best of the game. He took leave of his friends, saying, "You are disputing about the immortality of the soul; I am now going to be convinced of the truth: if I make any discovery upon that point, you shall hear of it." This reminds one of the message that Rabelais is said to have returned from his death-bed to Cardinal du Belay, who had sent to learn his state. "Tell the Cardinal, I am going to try

the great *Perhaps*." Poor frivolous wit and ecclesiastic! He had scarcely looked within the lids of that volume in which light and immortality are brought to light.

A singular vanity is sometimes witnessed in death-bed scenes. Augustus Cæsar called for his mirror, and ordered his hair and beard to be combed, and his wrinkled cheeks to be smoothed up; as if a little care at the toilet were sufficient preparation for appearing before the King of kings. Lord Byron remarks that during the latter part of the French Revolution, it became a fashion to leave some *mot* as a legacy, and that the quantity of facetious last words during that period would form a melancholy jest-book. This strange conceit existed earlier also in the Revolution. While Mirabeau was lying at the point of death, the Assembly directed its attention to the right of making wills. He sent for M. de Talleyrand, and put into his hands a speech which he had written. "It will be curious," said he, "to hear a man speaking against wills who has just made his own."—"Support," said he to his servant, "support this head, the greatest in France."

Anne Boleyn appears to have been as vain of her neck as Mirabeau was of his head. Just before her execution she said to the Lieutenant

of the Tower, "I hear that the executioner is very good, and I have a little neck;" at the same time putting her hands around it, and laughing heartily. It was only the year before that Sir Thomas More, observing the weakness of the scaffold on which he was about to die, said to the executioner, "I pray you see me up safe, and for my coming down, let me shift for myself." When he had laid his head upon the block, and saw the man ready with his weapon, "Stay friend," said he, "till I put aside my beard; for that never committed treason." Sad inconsistency! He made the Pope's supremacy a matter of conscience, and suffered a reputed martyrdom and yet made a jest of death. Had he been cotemporary with Petronius, we might perhaps smile at his ill-timed mirth; bearing as he did the Christian name, we can only feel a pity bordering upon contempt.

More than one rude nation, upon the first sight of cavalry, have imagined that the horse and rider are one. So too, there are multitudes, it would seem, who are so benighted or besotted as never to think otherwise than that the soul and body are all one; that the thinking principle is of no higher order than the material frame which it animates and directs. But what is this body?

"I call it mine, not me."

It is the mere attire, the mere dwelling of the soul. Does the dress make the man? Is the occupant for the house, or the house for the occupant? Of what has this tenement been constructed, that it should thus engross the living and the dying thoughts of its immortal inmate? Was it of some pure, ethereal substance that God originally made it? some compound brought from the stars? Were pearls and amber and diamonds employed? "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." It returns to earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it.

Friend, do you believe that you are immortal? —you who are all mirth and gaiety, who spend scarce a thought upon eternity; you who are driving on your schemes of ambition, or wealth, whose hopes and aims are all confined to this narrow sphere; do you really believe that you are immortal? You speculate on the duration of our national constitution, on the permanency of various civil and domestic institutions in our land and in the old world, but have you estimated the duration and destiny of your own spirit? When a prince makes himself companion and servant to his hounds; when a monarch goes about as footman to some mean subject, it can be overlooked; but when a deathless

soul buries itself in lust, luxury or avarice, it is unpardonable, it is appalling. Truly, madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.

CHAPTER V.

REMORSE AND DESPAIR.

It grasped what seemed a heart swollen, black,
And quivering with torture most intense;
And still the heart, with anguish throbbing high,
Made effort to escape, but could not ; for,
How' er it turned — and oft it vainly turned —
These complicated foldings held it fast,
— This is the worm that never dies.

Pollock.

THE name of Nero has become synonymous with imperial atrocity. After the first five years of his reign, the most diabolical acts continued to be perpetrated by him to the last. Under him occurred the first persecution of Christians. It was he who ordered Rome to be fired, and while the city was in flames, he ascended a tower, played upon his harp, and sung the song

of the burning of Troy, declaring that he wished the ruin of all things before his death. To screen himself from the odium of this conflagration, he charged the whole upon the Christians. Among those who, at different times, became the victims of his uncontrolled malignity, were many of his nearest relatives, and hence his exclamation, "My wife, my mother and my father are hurrying me to my end."

Charles IX., of France, was a modern Nero, as the memorable St. Bartholomew's massacre, conducted under his auspices, can testify. The day after the butchery of thirty thousand Hugonots, he observed several fugitives about his palace, and taking a fowling piece, fired upon them repeatedly. Was it strange that he died in peculiar horror? "What blood," he cried out, "what murders!—ah, I have followed wicked advice. O my God! pardon me and be merciful.—I know not where I am, I am so perplexed and agitated. How will all this end? What shall I do? I am lost forever; I know it."

During the Papist persecution in England, one Rockwood distinguished himself for his busy malignity, and in his last sickness he fell to raging, "I am utterly damned!" He was exhorted to ask mercy of God, but he roared out, "It is now too late, for I have maliciously

sought the death of many godly persons, and that against my own conscience, and therefore it is now too late." "Write the word *Remorse*; show it to me,"—said John Randolph on his death-bed.

Let it not be replied that most of these were men of rare attainments in wickedness, and that such only can be expected to feel the horror here described. True, the paricide and the persecutor do, to an eminent degree, lay up for themselves magazines of anguish; but every impenitent man carries a torpid scorpion in his bosom. If it be not waked before, the fire that never is quenched will rouse it into undying activity. The conscience may be long seared; it is never consumed. Little did Joseph's brethren suspect the violence they had done to themselves, till, in their distress, they said to one another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. No sin is slight. Every man whose heart has not been sprinkled from an evil conscience by the justifying blood of Jesus, may well tremble in view of his present insensibility and his inevitable future remorse.

Similar is it with respect to the feeling of

despair. The sick man's hope often expires before he does himself, and when despair has once taken possession of the impenitent mind, it seems as really to have done with probation as if the irreversible decree, *Depart*, had been pronounced. "Ah!" said a dying man to Hervey, "the day in which I ought to have worked is over; and now I see a horrible night approaching, bringing with it the blackness of darkness forever. Woe is me; when God called, I refused. Now I am in sore anguish; and yet this is but the beginning of sorrows. I shall be destroyed with an everlasting destruction."

And is there a pastor living who has not had substantially the same said to him; who has not witnessed the haggard countenance, and heard the indescribable tones which proclaim *No hope?* Alas, alas for the man whose life is done, and whose great work is still undone!

CHAPTER VI.

PERDITION PREFERRED.

Hail horrors, hail
Infernal world ! and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor — one who brings a mind
Not to be changed by place or time.

Paradise Lost.

MACCHIAVELLI, who taught the art of ruling tyrannically, appears to have been an infidel, if not an atheist. The latter part of his life particularly was passed in great contempt of religion. At the very point of death he expressed a preference for being sent to hell rather than heaven; because in heaven he would find nothing but a company of beggars, monks, hermits and apostles; whereas in hell he would live with popes, kings and princes. There is a tinge of blasphemous humor in this, yet it was perhaps the expression of his real preference. The sceptic, if honest, would always confess that his heart is more in harmony with the pit than with Paradise.

Cassander was one of the greatest geniuses of his time, yet his talents did not secure him

a comfortable subsistence. He became embittered toward mankind, and not less so toward Providence. In his last agonies, when the priest entreated him to rely upon the justice of Heaven, he replied, "If God has shown me no justice here, what reason have I to expect any from him hereafter?" "Let me entreat you," continued the confessor, "by all that is dear, to be reconciled to God, your father, your maker and friend." "No," replied the exasperated man, "you know the manner in which he left me to live; and,"—pointing to the straw on which he was lying, "you see the manner in which he leaves me to die!"

Urceus was a learned Italian of the fifteenth century. He resided at Forli, and had an apartment in the palace. His room was so dark that he was obliged to employ artificial light during the day. Having gone out at one time, without extinguishing the candle, his library took fire, and certain papers which he had prepared with great care for the press, were consumed. Being informed of this, he was affected to desperation, and running furiously to the palace, he stopped at the door of his apartment, and cried out, "Christ Jesus, what mighty crime have I committed; whom of your followers have I ever injured, that you

thus rage with inexpressible hatred against me?" Then, turning to an image of the Virgin Mary, "Virgin," said he, "hear what I have to say, for I speak in earnest, and with a composed spirit; if I should happen to address you in my dying moments, I humbly entreat you not to hear me, or receive me into heaven; for I am determined to spend all eternity in hell." Those who heard this appalling outburst, endeavored to comfort him, but to no purpose. He turned misanthrope as well as hater of God, and spent the remainder of his days, like a savage, in the deep solitude of a wood.

Some will pronounce this a case of insanity. Possibly it was. Yet there was in that man's heart a moral madness which prepared the way for his mental alienation, if it must be called such. His sudden misfortune roused the wrath of that carnal mind which is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God—the law of holy precept or sovereign providence—neither indeed can be.

Cases like the foregoing are unusual only in degree and frank expression, not in the nature of the feelings expressed. That malignant depravity with which the heart is naturally and universally infected, constitutes an affinity with lost spirits, and an heirship in the world of per-

dition. The theology of the unsanctified heart cannot harmonize with that of the word of God. The two systems come from opposite sources, and are entertained by dissimilar states of mind. There may be such insensibility in the sinner's heart to all revealed truths, that he will not attend sufficiently to know whether he be averse to them or not, but let him be so far aroused as to apprehend distinctly the fact that he is in the hands of a holy and sovereign God; that sovereign mercy alone has spared him to the present moment; that for aught any created being knows, sovereign justice may the next moment drop him into the furnace beneath, and it will be fearfully evident that his theology and that of the Bible stand in the most determined repugnance.

CHAPTER VII.

RESIGNED.

He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender — kind,
And grieved for those he left behind.

Prisoner of Chillon.

Thus has many a prisoner, and many another one meekly surrendered his spirit. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" prayed the dying protomartyr; "And when he had said this, he fell asleep." What a sleep was that! What a couch did he recline upon! What a good night did he bid those around him! We are in the habit of saying that Stephen died; we are wont to think that he was overpowered, that life was violently forced from him, when the mob gnashed with their teeth, and assaulted him, and casting him out of their city, stoned him. But this is a mistake. That martyr, as he kneeled, and finally sank under the shower of missiles, was a perfect victor. His fortitude was an overmatch for the malignity of his persecutors;

the Christian meekness he exhibited was more signal than the fierce bigotry of the Jews. While his enemies were looking on in impotent fury, he went calmly to sleep amidst a volley, and on a bed of stones. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!

Thousands have followed him to glory, repeating the same words, — Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Bishop Hooper prayed in the flames, “ Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me ; Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me ; Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” “ Thus was he three quarters of an hour or more in the fire. Even as a lamb, patiently he bore the extremity thereof, neither moving forwards nor backwards, nor to any side ; but having his lower part burnt, and his vitals destroyed, he died as quietly as a child in bed.”

A little later suffered Dr. Rowland Taylor. In the midst of the flames he stood motionless, with his hands folded, praying, “ Merciful Father of heaven, for Jesus Christ, my Saviour's sake, receive my soul into thy hands !” So too, Latimer, “ O Father of heaven, receive my soul !”

Lady Margaret Stewart said to her husband, “ My dear, resign my soul to God ; I have resigned it to him already. I had it from God,

and I have given it back to him." After prayer she fell quietly asleep, being heard to breathe out the words, "O feeling High Priest, keep that which I have committed to thee!" Dr. Watts, wearing out under his infirmities, remarked repeatedly, "I bless God I can lie down with comfort at night, not being solicitous whether I awake in this world or another."

And what is Christian resignation, whether in view of death or any other event? It does not consist in insensibility, a mere torpor of the mind. Not to rave or repine, simply because one does not feel, is to divide merit with the brute beast. There is such a thing as a gradual, voluntary paralysis of the soul. By vicious indulgence, or by crime, the more delicate and noble sensibilities of the soul may become extinct. To be quiet under the rod, when thus stupefied, indicates anything but fortitude.

It was half farcical and half sublime, when the Stoic philosopher, upon hearing of the death of his son, simply remarked, "I knew he was mortal." Very different was the Psalmist's philosophy; "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." The old man to whom Samuel bore heavy tidings, said, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." David and Eli felt keenly. Not to

feel at all is no proof of submission ; nor, on the other hand, is it proof that a person is not submissive, because he feels deeply. It is as irregular if there be no secretion of tears, as when there is a perpetual flow ; and a drought is often more disastrous than a flood.

Resignation is not the same as composure. Thomas Hooker and Ebenezer Erskine were resigned in death, and they were singularly calm and self-possessed, for each closed his own eyes as he expired ; but then James I. did the same.

How often does the military chieftain exhibit great composure. Marshall Ney—and he is only one of many—with open eyes, and without agitation, turned to the file of soldiers drawn up to despatch him, and striking his hand on his heart, gave himself the word, “Soldiers—fire!”

A counterfeit resignation is no unusual thing. The emperor Mauritius, after being dethroned, was compelled to witness the murder of his wife and family. Five of his sons were slain in his presence, but he bore the sight with apparent meekness, only repeating, as each son received the fatal stroke, “Righteous art thou, O Lord, and true are thy judgments!” Our first thought is that his Christian character must have been as eminent as his civil stand-

ing and his last misfortunes ; but upon looking at his previous life we find very little evidence that he was a Christian at all.

Still more striking is the case of another emperor at Constantinople, the usurper Andronicus. By his butcheries he so exasperated the inhabitants of that city, that they rose in a mass, and literally tore him in pieces : yet, during the three days of his torment, all that escaped the mouth of that monster was, " Lord, have mercy on me," and " wilt thou break a bruised reed ? "

Now, because an avaricious and a blood-thirsty tyrant calls thus upon God, are we to suppose he dies in the consolations of divine favor ? Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Let no undue importance, then, be attached to a death-bed prayer. The person who has reason to expect that his last petitions will be heard, is the one who, uniformly and in health, cultivates a devout spirit. Very common and equally mistaken is the idea that resignation is required only at emergencies. True, it is often specially required then ; but if not exercised at other times, it is not likely to be then. No one can carry a heavy burden who has never carried lighter ones.

There is no chivalry in piety; its achievements are not sudden and striking. Everything indeed, in the material or spiritual world, produced or acquired, that is peculiarly excellent and lasting, is the work of time, just as the choicest of oriental gems are slowly elaborated and wept forth. Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHEERFUL.

Natalitia Martyrum et Sanctorum.

THE early Christians noted in the calendar those days on which distinguished confessors died, and called them as above, *The birth-days of martyrs and saints*. On the annual return of such occasions, birth-day feasts were celebrated. At the funerals of those witnesses for the Word, they sang psalms and hymns, and at their graves they did the same.

The Christian's death is indeed an event full of joy to him. It is the beginning of life eternal, and in that view of it, how suitably may the dying believer and surviving friends make melody in their hearts, and with their tongues. Many times have there been concerts of voices which were simultaneously silenced in death. Under Bonner's reign of terror a company of five persons suffered martyrdom at one time and in one fire at Canterbury. Though surrounded by flames, they lifted up their souls in singing psalms, and expired in the midst of high praises to God. In more recent times, a Spanish priest, by the name of Gonzales, and his two sisters, had become Protestants. After suffering repeated tortures in the Inquisition, they were at last put to death. The three stakes to which they were fastened were near each other. Gonzales, who had been gagged till the moment the fire was lighted, employed the few minutes he was able to speak in comforting his sisters with whom he sung the one hundred and ninth Psalm, till the flames smothered their voices.

In Lauderdale's persecution Alexander Hume was sacrificed under circumstances of peculiar injustice and atrocity. Yet was he firm and cheerful; and among his last words were, "It doth minister no small peace and joy

to me this day, that the Lord hath set his love upon me, one of Adam's unworthy posterity, and has given the best assurance of his love working in my heart, whereby he hath inclined me to look towards himself, and make choice of him for my everlasting portion. It is the Lord Jesus, and he alone, who is my rock and the strength and stay of my soul." While the rope was about his neck, and immediately before his being suspended, he sung the last verse of the seventieth Psalm.

Jerome of Prague, on his way to the place of execution, sung several hymns; he embraced the stake with great cheerfulness, and when the executioner went behind him to set fire to the fagots, he said, "Come here and kindle it before my eyes; for had I been afraid of it I should not have come here, having had so many opportunities to escape." When the flames began to envelope him, he sung another hymn, and the last words he was heard to articulate, were :

"This soul in flames, I offer, Christ, to thee!"

"It was a fearful, yet a glorious thing,
To hear that hymn of martyrdom, and know
That its glad stream of melody could spring
Up from the unsounded depths of human wo."

There may be cheerfulness, however, without singing. Hilary, who lived in the fourth century, could say, "O my soul, make thine exit out of this world! Why dost thou pause and stop? Thou hast served God these three score years and ten, and art thou afraid to die?" "I believe," said Adolph Clarebach, "I believe there is not a merrier heart in the world, at this instant, than mine,"—and that was the instant of his martyrdom.

Richard Hooker closed his life with these words; "God hath heard my daily petitions, for I am at peace with all men, and he is at peace with me; and from this blessed assurance I feel that inward joy which this world can neither give nor take from me; my conscience beareth me this witness, and this witness makes the thoughts of death joyful. I could wish to live to do the Church more service, but cannot hope it, for my days are past as a shadow that returns not."

John Campbell, missionary to South Africa, said to his wife, "Do not grieve. There is nothing melancholy in dying, and going home to glory." That was just as the last gleam of the setting sun fell on his dying bed; and he smiled, and fell asleep in Jesus.

Such sanctified cheerfulness in death has a pe-

eculiar charm. It bespeaks a genuine elevation of soul. The higher exhibitions of it are in cases where, as in several of the foregoing, an individual stands in immediate contemplation of a violent departure; but on ordinary occasions, and amidst the every day concerns of life, there is no temperament so desirable as that of a sanctified equanimity; and to one in the possession of that, death will seem as cheerful an event as any other.

CHAPTER IX.

RAPTUROUS.

"'T is heaven, all heaven descending on the wings
Of the glad legion of the King of kings !
'T is more — 't is God diffused through every part,
'T is God himself, triumphant in the heart !"

THE instances cited in the preceding chapters are chiefly of a calm character, the repose rather than the rapture of heaven. Many, however, in their last hours have had joy unspeakable and full of glory. Of this number was Samuel Rutherford, well known for his

Letters and other works. A short time before death he said, "Now I feel—I enjoy—I rejoice; I feed upon manna; I have angels' food—my eyes shall see my Redeemer—I know that he shall stand at the latter day on the earth, and I shall be caught up in the clouds to meet him in the air."

John Janeway, whose name has already been mentioned, died while yet a young man. He preached two sermons only, and they were upon *Intimate communion with God*. His life and death were an illustration of the theme. On his sick-bed he would say to ministers and other Christian friends who came in, "O help me, help me, my friends, to admire and praise him who hath done such astonishing things for my soul—and wonders for my soul! He hath pardoned all my sins, and hath filled me with his goodness. He hath given me grace and glory, and no good thing hath he withheld from me. Come, help me, all ye mighty and glorious angels, who are so well skilled in this heavenly work of praise! Praise him all ye creatures upon earth; let everything that hath breath praise God. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!" "I have now nothing else to do. I have done with prayer and all other ordinances. I have almost done conversing with mortals. I

shall presently behold Christ himself, that died for me, and loved me, and washed me in his own blood. I shall, before a few hours are over, be in eternity, singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb. I shall presently stand upon Mount Zion, with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and with Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant. I shall hear the voice of much people, and be one among them which shall say, Hallelujah, glory, salvation, honor and power unto the Lord our God; and again we shall say Hallelujah. Methinks I stand, as it were, with one foot in heaven, and the other upon earth. Methinks I hear the melody of heaven, and by faith I see the angels waiting to carry my soul to the bosom of Jesus, and I shall be forever with the Lord in glory. And who can choose but rejoice in all this?"

Who is not familiar with the closing scene in the life of Payson? "The celestial city is now full in my view. Its glories beam upon me—its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, and this appears but an insignificant rill, that may be crossed by a single step, whenever God shall give permission." Sober-minded and self-pos-

essed as Evarts had been through life, he could not repress the rapture of his last hour: "Wonderful, wonderful glory! We cannot understand, we cannot comprehend wonderful glory. I will praise him, I will praise him!" In the verandah of a heathen temple, Gordon Hall repeated thrice, "Glory to thee, O God!" and then yielded up his spirit.

Is not this an earnest, is it not the commencement of an eternal weight of glory? Yes, before the soul quits its lodging-place, a voice is sometimes heard, saying, Come and see. Apocalyptic visions are disclosed, and a transport of feeling enjoyed, which, perhaps even the exile on Patmos did not experience. These men, Rutherford, Payson, Evarts, had prelibations of the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Such expiring believers have more than a Pisgah view of the promised inheritance; they are caught up to where Paul once was, to the third heaven, and hear unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

The rapture of these dying saints had, evidently, nothing spurious in it. It was only a higher measure of the same exercises with which they had long been conversant. Joyful

anticipations, proceeding from unfounded confidence are, it is true, not unfrequent. Mohammed's last words were, "O God, pardon my sins!— Yes, I come among my fellow citizens on high;" and Collins, the deist, just before he died declared that as he had always endeavored, to the best of his ability, to serve God, his king and his country, so he was persuaded he was going to that place which God had designed for them that love him. A singular method, his, of testifying love to God!

"I feed on angel's food," said Rutherford. Was that the first time he had tasted it? No; it had been his aliment—it is every true Christian's aliment—from the hour of the new birth onward to all eternity. The children of God, wearied and famished, do, from day to day, taste the hidden manna of life while on earth, and are refreshed and strengthened by it. Still it seems foreign in this world. Fragrant it is, and its flavor is celestial; but it is another thing in Paradise. Through everlasting ages its freshness will be found gladdening and vivifying. To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life that is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

CHAPTER X.

THE INEBRIATE.

"I could both drink wine profusely, and bear it well."

SUCH was the epitaph of king Darius, the son of Hystaspes. The capacity of wine-bibbing was held in such esteem among the later Persians, that a monumental inscription like the one above, would present nothing incongruous to their eyes. It was a boast of the living, and a eulogy upon the dead.

The means and habit of intoxication have been almost universal. Neither philosophy nor legislation have effected anything more than a check. Arcessilaus, the philosopher, at the age of seventy-five died of *delirium tremens*. Lacydas, his successor in the academic chair, died of a palsy, occasioned by excessive drinking; and Chrysippus, also, from a surfeit of new wine at a sacrifice to which his scholars had invited him. Indeed, Seneca not only recommends drinking more freely than ordinary on certain occasions, but says that we must sometimes carry it even to drunkenness. In regard,

for instance, to Cato's intemperance, he maintains that it would be easier to prove that drunkenness is a virtue, than that Cato was guilty of anything base and vicious. It was the peculiar province of the Stoic to argue that the wise man may be inebriated, but is not thereby overcome; that his body may be disordered by wine, but it cannot hurt his mind; and that he is a perfect master of himself though in a fit of intoxication. So that the wise man, even if intoxicated, and expiring in a gutter, is nevertheless, according to the anomalous casuistry and nomenclature of the Stoic, a *king*.

Veritable kings and princes have, in full proportion with others, been addicted to this vice, which has frequently brought them to an untimely end. King Elah was slain while "drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza." David's son Ammon, came to his end while his "heart was merry with wine." Marches, sieges, pitched battles, extremes of heat and cold, exposures in the flood and the desert, did not overpower Alexander the great, but the cup of Hercules did. After conquering the world, he became at the age of thirty-two, an inglorious martyr to Bacchus. At a former carousal given by him, Promachus, having swallowed two and a half gallons of wine, received the crown

which had been proposed as a prize to the most capacious drinker. He survived his victory but three days, and of the other guests, forty died of their inordinate drinking.

Catherine II. of Russia, was intemperate. When her husband, Peter III. died, she published to the world that it had pleased Providence to remove him by a hemoroidal cholic. The truth was, it pleased Catherine to have poisoned brandy administered to him, after which he was smothered. Amurath expired after draining a full goblet. Augustus II. of Poland, died as the fool dieth. He and the Prussian ambassador were desirous, each of discovering the other's sentiments upon the question of succession in Augustus' family; and for this purpose they made each other drunk. The king died immediately, and the ambassador fell into a sickness from which he never recovered.

But abstinence—the word is not now used in its restricted reference to intoxicating drinks alone—is not the exclusive element of virtue. Comparatively it is a small thing for a man to be fractionally virtuous. An inner principle is needed, which shall be total, consistent, and abiding in its manifestations. In the Word of God alone, shall we find a pure, comprehensive and consistent morality,—the only system of

ethics which has to do mainly with the heart, the poisoned fountain whence issue all corrupted streams. That alone comes with an authority that can claim the regard of all; that alone is seconded by a power and animated by motives which can secure its complete and universal triumph. Its merit is not that of physical constraint, a merit which it would have to divide with the chain and the bolt. Preëminently does it address the inner man, challenging a radical and universal reform. Yes, in the only desirable sense — it is radical, it takes hold of the roots. The emperor Domitian, ordered the vines of Gaul to be plucked up, fearing that their wines would draw the barbarians thither. And the Bible system does not simply scatter the contents of the cask, or lop an exubriant branch; it eradicates. Nor does it merely pluck up this pernicious stock, but also the deadly night-shade, the thistle, and the thorn. Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. Be not deceived, neither thieves, covetous, nor drunkards shall inherit the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER XI.

THE EPICURE.

Gula plures occidit quam gladius.

"MEAT kills more than the musket;" why then is no more thought in regard to excess at the table? — a practice, surely, quite common and not a little injurious. It is not too much to call it brutish, and even worse than brutish, for seldom do the lower animals go beyond the necessary demands of nature, or beyond what nature can safely sustain. What an over-loaded, jaded member is almost every one's stomach? supplied

"From every dish,

A tomb of boiled, and roast, of flesh and fish,
Where bile, and wind, and phlegm, and acid jar,
All the man in one intestine war,"

Apicius was the prince of epicures. There were three of this name who attained great celebrity, but the one who lived under the emperors Augustus and Tiberius, immortalized himself beyond the others by his voracity, and

by his refinements in the science of eating. He may be considered as having founded a school of gluttony at Rome. Pythagoras gave name to a class of philosophers, Apicius to a sect of cooks, and to sundry kinds of cakes. Of all the greedy and prodigal sons of Epicurus, he had the profoundest gorge. And how did he end his days? He found himself deeply in debt. He was obliged to look into his affairs, and finding he had only two hundred and fifty thousand livres left, he poisoned himself from fear of starving on such a sum.

One of the successors of Augustus was Vitellius. His vices raised him to the throne, and once in the place of the Cæsars, he gave himself up to unbounded luxury. It was his practice to feast four or five times a day, after taking, in each instance, an emetic to prepare the way for a fresh repast. At one supper two thousand fishes and seven thousand fowls were served up. In the course of only seven months the expenses of his table amounted to full six millions sterling. But this imperial vortex of the market and money of Rome could not be tolerated. Before a twelvemonth had come round, Vespasian was proclaimed emperor. Vitellius, who hid himself under the porter's bed in his palace, was soon discovered. With

his hands tied behind his back, he was forced through the principal streets of the city, and after being beheaded, his body was thrown into the Tiber.

Hardicanute, one of the kings of England and Denmark, was so great a glutton as to be called *Swine's Mouth*. In the midst of a wedding banquet he dropped dead, to the no small joy of his subjects. Henry I., of England, died of a surfeit upon lampreys, and Melchior, duke of Brunswick, of a surfeit upon strawberries. Pomponius Columbus ate too freely of figs, and died suddenly. Pope Paul II. ate excessively of melons, which was the cause of his death. Over-eating killed Louis XIV. Colonel Gardiner, then connected with the English embassy at Paris, knowing that the king was ill, had predicted that he would not live over six weeks. This came to the ears of Louis. The next time he dined in public—and it was the last time—he ate immoderately, repeating two or three times to a nobleman in waiting, “It appears to me that I eat very well for a man who is to die so soon!” He did not recover from the excess of that meal.

To indulge in voracity is to be guilty of self-murder, slow or sudden. To eat excessively—to eat for appetite's sake, and not for health and

strength, is not enjoying the good things God has given, but rioting upon them. It is a shameful, sinful prodigality. When Crassus supped with Lucullus, the cost of an uncere- monious meal amounted to ten thousand dol- lars; and after the death of that consul, the fishes in the pond at his country seat sold for over a hundred and thirty thousand dollars. One of Caligula's dinners cost a million, eight hundred thousand francs. *Æsop*—not the fa- bulist—is said to have had a dish at one en- tertainment which cost above eight hundred pounds. His son improved upon this extrava- gant luxury of the father, by dissolving pearls to drink.*

But what man, who is more a man than a beast, would not prefer an honorable starvation to this? Better far be one of Lucullus' slaves, thrown as bait into his fish-pond, than be such a slave to appetite as Lucullus and the whole tribe of gourmands. Many a one, however, lives as if eating were the chief end of living. There was one Pacuvius at Rome, who was wont every day to solemnize his own funeral,

* These are cases which something more than realize what Napoleon said: "*Cochon à lengrais à la somme de trois mil- lions par an.*"

in a singular kind of pagentry. After gorging himself he was regularly carried from supper to bed, and the cry resounded through the house, "He is dead, he is dead!" In this there was a spark of wisdom; the very burlesque was a solemn sarcasm upon his folly.

Our Lord's command is, take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness.—What can be more incongruous than to ask a blessing at the table, and then make all despatch to sin by indulgence? Why be at so much pains and expense in preparing what will soon be a feast for worms? Why injure and distress the body, clog the mind, and stupify the soul by going beyond proper limits? Is an overloaded ship fit for sailing? Should we think of domesticating a cormorant?

A picture of Damocles, or rather of Dives and Lazarus, should adorn every banquet hall. Eat then to live, and not live to eat. Dishonor not a rational soul, disgrace not a self-denying religion, by excess in eating. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SCEPTIC.

Lo there in yonder fancy-haunted room,
What muttering curses tremble through the gloom,
When pale, and shivering, and bedewed with fear,
The dying Sceptic felt his hour drew near ;
From his parched tongue no meek hosanna fell,
No bright hope kindled at his faint farewell :
As the last throes of death convulsed his cheek,
He gnashed, and scowled, and raised a hideous shriek,
Rounded his eyes into a ghastly glare,
Locked his white lips — and all was mute despair.

Montgomery.

It was during Voltaire's last visit to Paris, when his triumph was complete, and he even feared that he should die with glory, amidst the acclamations of an infatuated theatre, that he was struck by the hand of Providence, and fated to make a very different termination of his career. In the midst of his triumphs a violent hemorrhage raised apprehensions for his life. D'Alembert, Diderot and Marmontel, hastened to support his resolution in his last moment, but were only witnesses to his ignomy, as well as to their own.

Here let not the historian fear exaggeration. Rage, remorse, reproach, and blasphemy, all

accompany and characterize the dying atheist. His death, the most terrible that is recorded to have stricken the impious man, will not be denied by his companions in iniquity. Their silence, however much they may wish to deny it, is the least of those corroborative proofs that that might be adduced. Not one of these sophisters has ever dared to mention any sign given of resolution or tranquility, by the premier chief, during the space of three months, which elapsed from the time he was crowned in the theatre, until his decease. Such a silence, expresses how great their humiliation was in his death. It was on his return from the theatre, and in the midst of the toils he was resuming, to acquire fresh applause, that Voltaire was warned that the long career of his impiety was drawing to a close. In spite of all the sophisters flocking around him, in the first days of illness, he gave signs of wishing to return to the God whom he had so often blasphemed. He called for the priests who ministered to *him*, whom he had sworn to *crush*, under the appellation of the wretch.* His danger increasing, he wrote the following note to Abbe Gaultier:

* Voltaire had been accustomed for many years, to call our Saviour the wretch. Many of his letters were concluded in these words — “*crush the wretch.*”

PARIS, 26th Feb. 1778.

"You had promised me, sir, to come and hear me; I entreat that you would take the trouble of calling as soon as possible."

(Signed)

VOLTAIRE.

A few days afterwards he wrote the following declaration in presence of Abbe Gaultier and Abbe Mignot, and the Marquis de Villevielle copied it from the minutes deposited with Moinet, notary at Paris:

"I, the underwritten, declare that, for these four days past, having been afflicted with a vomiting of blood, at the age of eighty-four, and not having been able to drag myself to church, the reverend, the rector of St. Solpice, having been pleased to add to his good works that of sending the Abbe Gaultier, a priest, I confessed to him; and if it pleases God to dispose of me, I die in the Holy Catholic faith, in which I was born; hoping that the divine mercy will deign to pardon all my faults. If ever I have scandalized the church, I ask pardon of God and the church.

VOLTAIRE.

In presence of Abbe Mignot, my nephew, and the Marquis de Villevielle, my friend."

March 2, 1778.

After the two witnesses had signed this declaration, he added these words, "The Abbe

Gaultier, my confessor, having apprised me that it was said among a certain set of people, I should protest against every thing I did, at my death; I declare that I never made such a speech; that it is an old jest, attributed long since to many of the learned, more enlightened than I am." Was this declaration a fresh instance of hypocrisy, for he had the mean hypocrisy, even in the midst of his efforts against Christianity, to receive the sacrament regularly, and to do other acts of religion, merely to be able to deny infidelity, if accused of it. After the explanations we have seen him give of his external acts of religion, might not there be room for doubt? Be that as it may, there is a public homage paid to that religion in which he meant to die, notwithstanding his having perpetually conspired against it in his life. This declaration is also signed by that same friend and adept, the Marquis, to whom Voltaire used to write, "conceal your march from the enemy, in your endeavors to crush the wretch." Voltaire had permitted this declaration to be carried to the rector of St. Sulpice, and the archbishop of Paris, to see if it would be sufficient. When the Abbe Gaultier returned with the answer, it was impossible for him to gain admission to the patient. The

conspirators had strained every nerve to hinder him from consummating the recantation, and every avenue was shut to the priest whom Voltaire had sent for. The demon haunted every access; rage succeeded to fury, during the remainder of his life.

Then it was that D'Alembert, Diderot and others of the conspirators who had beset his apartment, approached him but to witness their own shame. He would often curse them and exclaim, "Retire, it is you who have brought me to my present state. Begone! I could have done without you all, but you could not exist without me! And what a wretched glory have you produced me." Then would succeed the horrid remembrance of his conspiracy. They could hear him, the prey of anguish, alternately supplicating or blaspheming that God he had conspired against, and in plaintive accents, would he cry, "Oh Christ! oh Lord Jesus!" and then complain that he was abandoned by God and man. The hand that had traced in ancient, with the sentence of an impious and reviling king, seemed to trace before his eyes, *crush, then, do crush the wretch*. In vain he turned his head away; the time was coming apace, when he was to appear at the tribunal of Him whom he had blasphemed;

and his physician, Mr. Tronchir, calling in to administer relief, thunderstruck, retires, declaring the death of the impious man to be terrible indeed. The pride of the conspirators would have willingly suppressed this declaration, but it was in vain. The Mareschel of Richelieu flies from the bedside, declaring it to be a sight too terrible to be sustained, and Mr. Tronchir, that the furies of Orestes could give but a faint idea of those of Voltaire.*

Among the last words of Rousseau were: "Ah! my dear, how happy a thing it is to die, when one has no reason for remorse or self-reproach! Eternal Being, the soul that I am now going to give Thee back, is as pure at this moment, as it was when it proceeded from Thee; render it partaker of thy felicity!"

Lucilio Vanini, an Italian by birth, was one of the most determined and daring of atheists. He laughed at every thing sacred, denied the being of God, and ascribed all things to chance. Being cast into prison at Toulouse for his impieties, he pretended to be a Roman Catholic, but afterwards threw off all disguises, and scoffed at Christianity as he had done before. On his way to execution, he took particular pains to insult the Saviour, saying, "He sweat

* Baruel's History of Jacobinism.

with weakness and fear in going to suffer death; and I die undaunted." He was evidently in trepidation, yet would cry out, "I die like a philosopher."

Mirabeau, like all the leading names of France for the last century, was an infidel; it was the melancholy fancy of the time, and considered essential to the reputation of all who pretended to philosophy. There was but little in the religion of the land to rebuke the evil spirit—and its name was Legion. His last effort, when his speech failed him, was to write on his tablets—"Death is but a sleep;" and a request for some opium to extinguish his life and his pains together. Still, even in this fatal insensibility to all that constitutes the greatness of the dying mind, and of those illustrious hopes and feelings which to Christians throw their light across the grave, the sinking man of genius showed some of that brilliancy which had once given him such distinction among his countrymen. "Take away from my sight," said he, "all those funeral looking things. Why should man be surrounded by the grave before his time? Give me flowers, let me have essences, arrange my dress. Let me hear music, and let me close my eyes in harmony." But this passed away with the return of pain,

and he once more asked for opium to end the struggle. The physician, to quiet his mind, gave him some water in a cup, telling him that it was opium. He swallowed it—dropped back upon his pillow—and was dead.*

Tindal, who was protestant and papist by turns, as convenience suited, but was uniform in infidelity alone, died with this prayer in his mouth: "O God—if there is a God—I desire Thee to have mercy on me." Hobbs used to call death, "taking a leap in the dark," of which he appears to have had the most dreadful apprehensions. It is related of him, that discoursing one day with a lady of distinction, he said to her, that were he master of the world, he would give it all to live one day longer. She expressed astonishment at such a remark from "the philosopher of Malmsbury," who had so many friends to oblige, and who would not deny himself one day's gratification of life to put them in possession of such ample treasures. He replied, "What shall I be the better for that, when I am dead? I say again, if I had the whole world to dispose of, I would give it to live one day." Thomas Paine, like Gibbon, was unwilling to be left alone as he approached the

* Mirror of Christian Evidences.

unseen world. Though in conversation he might express a willingness to die, yet if the curtains were closed he would scream till they were opened, and he could see that some one was near. In his paroxysms of distress he would cry out, "O Lord, help me! God, help me! Jesus Christ, help me!" Dr. Manley, his physician, inquired of him, whether, from his calling upon the Saviour, it would be just to conclude that he was convinced of his divinity, and whether he had renounced his former sentiments, and at length assented to the truth of the gospel? To all such questions, Paine made no reply. But when they were repeated and he was asked again if he believed Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, he answered, "I have no wish to believe any thing upon that subject."

The well-known Dr. Cooper, of South Carolina, wrote thus to Judge Hirtell: "My shortness of breath is not now distressing; my legs swell painfully by bed-time. I walk with some difficulty from one room to the opposite. It is possible I may live over this spring. I greatly disapprove of all kinds of clerical religion, as I do of the whole clerical body every where. Of a future state I have no evidence. Knowing therefore *nothing about it*, I shall die, *believing nothing, hoping nothing, fearing nothing, caring nothing.*"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MARTYR.

Sing to the Lord ! let harp, and lute, and voice,
Up to the expanding gates of Heaven rejoice,
While the bright martyrs to their rest are borne;
Sing to the Lord ! their blood-stained course is run,
And every head its diadem hath won,
Rich as the purple of the Summer's morn ;
Sing the triumphant champions of their God,
While burn their mounting feet along their sky-ward road.
Milman.

WHENEVER an era of vigorous propagation of the gospel has occurred, the persecuting wrath of men and devils has been proportionately roused. Every exodus from the house of bondage, every march of the sacramental host to a new and more ample heritage, has led them through the Red Sea.

The three centuries following the death of Stephen, the protomartyr, were fruitful in Christian heroes. Notwithstanding an admixture of enthusiasm, and the subsequent exaggeration of careless or unprincipled writers, it must be admitted that of the primitive Chris-

tians who sealed their faith with their blood, there was a mighty army, of whom the world was not worthy. The disparaging efforts of Dodwell and Hume will not convince candid minds of the contrary. The modes of torture employed were as various as the most malignant ingenuity could suggest. The sword, scourge, fire, cross and gibbet; drowning, stoning, flogging, racking, broiling and searing, were among the methods resorted to. Many were lacerated with red hot pincers, and others thrown upon the horns of wild bulls. *Christianos ad leones* was familiarised to all Romans. Wild beasts, in the ampitheatre, might be gorged with the blood of the saints, but the eyes of more merciless spectators were never sated.

Every one is familiar with the circumstances under which Polycarp, the venerable bishop of Smyrna, died. The prayer which he offered at the stake is a memorable one; "O Father of thy beloved and blessed Son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained the knowledge of thee; O God of angels and principalities, and of all creation, of all the just who live in thy sight, I bless thee that thou hast counted me worthy of this day and this hour, to receive my portion in the number of martyrs, in the cup of Christ, for the resurrection to eternal

life, both of soul and body, in the incorruption of the Holy Ghost, among whom may I be received before thee this day, as a sacrifice, well-savored and acceptable, which thou, the faithful and true God hast prepared, promised and fulfilled accordingly. Wherefore I praise thee for all those things, I bless thee, I glorify thee, by the eternal High Priest, Jesus Christ, thy well-beloved Son, through whom, with him in the Holy Spirit, be glory to thee both now and forever. Amen."

Cyprian, whose residence at Carthage in the third century, gave celebrity to the place, displayed great firmness at his execution. When the proconsul delivered his sentence in these words, "We will, and it is our pleasure that Thracius Cyprianus be beheaded," "God be praised," replied the martyr. In the same century, Peter, a young man of superior qualities of mind and body, being brought before Optimus, proconsul of Asia, was commanded to sacrifice to Venus. Protesting against this, he was ordered to be stretched on a wheel, by which his bones were broken in a shocking manner; but his torments only inspired him with fresh courage; he smiled on his persecutors, and seemed, by the serenity of his countenance, not to upbraid but to applaud his tormentors.

Happy would it be for the Christian name, if persecution and martyrdom had been experienced only at the hands of pagans; but the same diabolical spirit which reigned in the breasts of many Roman emperors, has reigned in the breasts of many Roman pontiffs. The Hall of Torture, in the Inquisition, has been, for ages, the vestibule of Hell, where spirits of darkness have been suffered to vent their horrid spite. Public and private executions and massacres, for the crime of heresy, have hurried from the world ten-fold more victims of papal than of pagan intolerance. The Duke of Alva boasted of having put to death, in the Netherlands, thirty-six thousand by the hand of the common executioner, during the space of a few years. Within a period of thirty years, the Inquisition destroyed one hundred and fifty thousand. In a less time than that, after the rise of the order of Jesuits, nine hundred thousand perished. Of the Waldenses, a million were cut off in France. Careful investigation shows that popery slaughtered more than fifty millions, for the crime of not paying homage to the mother of harlots. This will average more than forty thousand religious murders for every year of her portentous existence. And I saw the woman drunken with

the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

Bohemia, and various parts of Germany, furnished many reformers before the reformation of the sixteenth century.

Sir Gaspar Kaplitz, a nobleman eighty-six years of age, was a martyr of those days. Reaching the place of execution, he addressed the principal officer thus : " Behold an unworthy and ancient man, who has often entreated God to take me out of this wicked world, but could not till now obtain his desire ; for God reserved me till these years to be a spectacle to the world and a sacrifice to himself ; therefore God's will be done." He was assured that on account of his great age, if he would simply ask pardon, it should be granted. " Ask pardon ! " he exclaimed, " I will ask pardon of God, whom I have frequently offended, but not of the emperor whom I have never injured. Should I sue for pardon, it might justly be suspected I had committed some crime, for which I deserved this fate. No, no ; as I die innocent, and with a clear conscience, I would not be separated from these noble companions who have preceded me to Heaven." Saying this, he cheerfully resigned his neck to the executioner.

From the Continent we pass to England.

We see Ridley and Latimer meeting at the place of execution — Ridley kissing his fellow-sufferer, and saying, "Be of good heart brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or else strengthen us to abide it." When fastened to the stake, he lifted up his hands toward Heaven, and in a manner similar to Polycarp, prayed: "O Heavenly Father, I give thee most hearty thanks that thou hast called me to be a professor of thee, even unto death. I beseech thee, Lord God, have mercy upon the realm of England, and deliver her from all her enemies!" Nearly cotemporary with him, in reform and martyrdom, was the Rev. Laurence Saunders, who, upon arriving at the stake, kissed it, saying, "Welcome thou cross of Christ! welcome everlasting life!" John Frith cheerfully embraced the lighted fagots, and so did many of the martyrs, females as well as others. Cicely Ormes, of Norwich, England, when brought to the stake, applied her lips to it, saying, "Welcome cross of Christ!" So too Elizabeth Folks, and the five who suffered with her, clapped their hands for joy in the midst of the flames. Among the many victims of Bonner, that child of the Devil, was Robert Smith. In prison and at his execution, he displayed to an unusual degree a cheerful

resignation. In a letter to his wife he said, "I am in the same state you left me in, rather better than worse, looking for the living God, before whom I hunger full sore to appear, and receive the glory, of which I trust thou art willing to be partaker." When, at his execution, the fire had completely blackened and shrivelled his body, and all supposed him dead, he suddenly rose upright, and extending his arms, from which the hands were already burnt, clapped them together in joy, and then expired. In 1682 Andrew Guillam, a weaver, was executed in Edinburgh. He received nine strokes before his hands were severed from the arms; and after the right hand was cut off he held up the bleeding stump and exclaimed, "My blessed Lord sealed my salvation with his blood, and I am honored this day to seal his truths with my blood."

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth! And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them that they should rest yet

for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

CHAPTER XIV.

WITNESSES FOR THE WORD.

Star of eternity! the only star
By which the bark of man could navigate
The sea of life, and gain the shores of bliss
Securely! only star which rose on time,
And on its dark and troubled billows, still
As generation, drifting swiftly by,
Succeeded generation, threw a ray
Of heaven's own light, and to the hills of God,
The eternal hills, pointed the sinner's eye.

Pollock

THE Sibylline leaves, the lying and ambiguous oracles of Delphos and Jupiter Ammon; and the Institutes of Zoroaster and Numa were profoundly revered. The Koran and the Shasters hold a similar place in the esteem of their respective adherents. What place, then, should the Word of Him who cannot lie, hold in all hearts? How should the responses of our

holy Urim and Thummim awe and animate believers? Multitudes have so felt their power, as to undergo persecution, bonds and death, in testimony of attachment to the sacred volume. It is a great cloud of witnesses who have been companions in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. Many martyrs have suffered specifically for their unwillingness to surrender the Scriptures. Marculus and Catulinus, for instance, early in the Christian era, were brought before a pagan governor, and the alternative presented of betraying those who had Bibles in their hands, or of suffering death. They replied, "We are no traitors; rather will we die. Behold here we are!" One Saturninus refused to give up his Bible, and was immediately killed. Euplius was asked, "Why hast thou retained Bibles in thy hands, contrary to the emperor's commands?" He answered, "I am a Christian, and am not at liberty to surrender them; rather would I die than surrender them. These writings assure me of the life eternal, and whoever gives them up, forfeits that eternal life." They bound a Bible to his neck, and beheaded him. A female Christian, Irene by name, was brought before the tribunal of Dulcentius, and thus ad-

dressed, "Forasmuch as thou hast till this day, withheld so many writings of the Christians, and when they were discovered hast acknowledged them as such, but hast not been warned by the punishment of death; so hast thou properly incurred this punishment; nevertheless all shall be passed by provided thou wilt worship our gods." "By no means will I do that; so help me Almighty God." "Who then hath beguiled thee to withhold the Bible even to this day?" "The Almighty God, who hath commanded us to love him, even in death; therefore we cannot deny him, but we will suffer ourselves to be burned alive, and endure everything which may befall us, rather than surrender the Holy Scriptures." After suffering the greatest indignities, she was condemned to be burned, and with entire cheerfulness met that excruciating death.

These are specimens of the persecution endured by Christians under the Roman emperors of the first three centuries, and of the strong attachment which they manifested to the Word of God. We pass to the sixteenth century, and it is not pagan but papal Rome which now persecutes. At Buda, for instance, in Hungary, a bookseller who had distributed copies of the New Testament, and also some of Luther's

writings, was seized and bound to the stake. An enclosure of these books was formed around him and fire set to the pile. The man showed the spirit of a primitive martyr, rejoicing in the midst of the flames. It became a common practice for the priests to tie about the necks of those martyrs whom they brought to the stake, whatever scraps of the Bible had been found in their possession. Longland, a bishop of Lincoln—and he was by no means the only one of the kind—was in the uniform habit of sending persons to the stake simply for reading the Scriptures in English.

One boast of the Romish Church is that it never changes, and herein, at least, it is *semper eadem*—ever the same in its implacable intolerance toward the free use of God's word. True, there have been Romish dignitaries who did not participate in this; eminent and praiseworthy exceptions to the prevailing bigotry there are and have been, as Leander, Van Ess and Sylvester de Sacy, yet a statute provision of that Church, and the sworn obligation of her sons, is to oppose all free reading of the Scriptures in any vernacular tongue. Individual exceptions do not determine the prevailing spirit and action of a body of men. Many professed infidels have spoken well of the Bible;

complimentary passages might be cited from the writings of Herbert, Hobbs, Shaftsbury, Morgan, Bolinbroke, Rousseau, and others; still scepticism is scepticism, baptised or unbaptised, in ancient or in modern times, in pagan or in papal Rome. But why this opposition to an unrestricted enjoyment of the lively oracles? Every child knows that the Holy Ghost has communicated nothing by way of approbation concerning papal supremacy and infallibility, transubstantiation, purgatory, prayers for the dead, and to the Saints and the Virgin; that the Scriptures say nothing of holy water, relics and the rosary, nothing about celibacy in the priesthood, baptism of bells, signing with the cross; that they contain no word signifying archbishop, cardinal or pope, and make no mention of St. Patrick, St. Sebastian or St. Crispin; and contain no letters patent for indulgences, or for putting heretics to torture and to death.

It was at Rome that, for ages, clasps were manufactured for the sacred volume, and chains to bind it to the walls of dark and noisome monastic cells. She of the scarlet robe extended her tyranny to the eyes of men, arrogating to herself the privilege of the press, as well as the keys of Paradise, and claiming to

the sole depository and almoner of divine
 lations. But, allelujah, her days are
 umbered!

CHAPTER XV.

NOT ACCEPTING DELIVERANCE.

*Ecclesiarum principes,
 Belli triumphales duces,
 Cælestis aulæ milites,
 Et vera mundi lumina.*

Ambrose.

AND others were tortured not accepting de-
 lrance. Most instances of martyrdom nobly
 strate Christian steadfastness; but there are
 se in which, owing to efforts made to obtain
 ecantation, or to other circumstances, the
 nent of constancy became particularly con-
 spuous. It is not affirmed that among the
 ly or the later Christians who suffered perse-
 ion, all displayed remarkable or even com-
 n firmness; but it is affirmed that in a
 jority of cases there was much of cheerful
 l undaunted fortitude. The nearer those in-
 iduals came to heaven, the more heavenly

they were, and the more joyful at the thought of death. Just before his sufferings, Stephen was indeed filled with the Holy Ghost; but when actually stoned, he was able to look up steadfastly into heaven, and see the glory of God, and the son of man standing on the right hand of God. In a survey of such instances, most professed Christians now may well feel rebuked for the slight proficiency they have made in the school of Christ. Amidst a profusion of comforts, surrounded by none but friends, they shrink from a natural death even, and from everything that can be called a sacrifice; and this shamefully compromising and pusillanimous spirit is but too evident to all beholders. The holy men of old frown upon us. We would not suffer the superstition of any corrupt church to rob us of the lessons taught by those witnesses for Christ's cross and crown. From the third century onward, multitudes, it is true, paid them an extravagant regard, for martyrdom had come to be regarded by many as a passport to heaven. Religious worship became customary at the graves of those who had thus suffered; churches, called Martyria, were erected near them; eulogies were pronounced over them; reputed miracles were at length wrought at those venerated places, and the re-

mains of saints were dug up and revered as sacred relics. Exempt as we are from this idolatry of the Greek and Roman churches, we may safely gather a wreath from the graves of the martyrs.

In nearly all cases of early martyrdom there was the alternative of recantation or death ; and from the multitude of those cases selection is not easy. We pass to later times. About the middle of the sixteenth century, Giles Tilman was for many months confined with others in prison at Brussels. When the Gray Friars were sent to abuse him, he held his peace, so that they reported he had a dumb devil. Several times he might have escaped, the doors of the prison being left purposely open, but this Christian Socrates would not avail himself of such opportunities. When tidings were brought of his being sentenced to be burnt, he thanked God that the hour had come in which he might glorify the Lord. At the same period John Leafe, an apprentice in London, was imprisoned. Two papers were sent to him, one containing a recantation and the other his confession of faith. When the latter was read to him he opened a vein — for he could neither read nor write — and sprinkling his blood upon the document, bade the messenger go and show that he had already sealed his belief. Anne Askew, still

unable to support herself upright, owing to the terrible use which had been made of the rack, was brought to the place of her immolation. The Lord Chancellor sent her letters, offering the King's pardon, if she would recant; but she refused even to look upon them, saying, "I came not hither to deny my Lord and Master." The execution of Esch and Voes, the first martyrs of the reformation in Germany, lasted four hours. They sung psalms, pausing from time to time, to declare that they were resolved to die for the name of Jesus Christ. "Be converted, be converted," cried the inquisitors, "or you will die in the name of the Devil." "No," they replied, "we will die like Christians, and for the truth of the gospel." The fire consumed the cords which bound them to the stake, before their breath was gone. One of them feeling his liberty, dropped upon his knees in the midst of the flames, and clasping his hands, exclaimed, "Lord Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on us!" Being soon completely enveloped they shouted *Te deum laudamus*, and expired. There was occasion for Erasmus to remark as he did, "Whenever the nuntio lights a fire, then it seems as if he had sowed heretics."

The blood of martyrs has universally been seed for the church. In early times, Colcerins,

upon seeing the remarkable patience of Faustus and Julitta, in their excruciating torments, cried out, "Great indeed is the God of the Christians!" for which he was immediately apprehended and put to death. "The Christians," says Augustine, "were fettered; they were imprisoned; they were beaten; they were racked; they were burnt; and yet they multiplied."

The power residing in such examples to awaken Christian sympathy, is great indeed, and it is with peculiar force that they still operate in sustaining and animating the heart which divine grace has brought into fellowship with the sublime truths of our holy religion. Many a one has been cheered on to be faithful unto death, by calling to mind the glorious army of martyrs. "Sheep we are for the slaughter," said Francis Colver to his two sons, massacred together with himself; "this is no new thing; let us follow millions of martyrs through temporal death unto eternal life."

And others had trials of cruel mockings. This has been true in nearly every instance of unrighteous execution since our Lord hung upon the cross and they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. But there have been many

aggravated cases, of which one or two illustrations will suffice. In the St. Bartholomew massacre at Vassy, when any of the victims desired to have mercy showed them for the love of Jesus, the murderers would say in scorn, "You use the name of Christ, but where is your Christ now?" So in the massacre of the prisoners at Trois,—"Where is now your God?" cried the demons, "what has become of all your prayers and psalms now?" "Let your God, whom you call upon save you if he can." Some of the wretches sung in scorn to their victims these words, "Judge me, O God, and plead my cause," while others beating them cried, "Sing now, Have mercy on me, O God."

Take, my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering afflictions, and of patience. It was indeed a chariot of fire in which they were caught up from the earth, but were they not borne heavenward? Were they not received from the midst of insulting throngs to the palm-bearing host? They preferred a thorn from the crown of Christ, to any garland of ease or fame. They reckoned that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which is to be revealed in them, and they were the real heroes of our world

The very first who went from earth to heaven was a martyr, and he is at the head of a long and glorious line. With the blood of righteous Abel began that stream, in which mingled the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar — that stream which has been swelled by the life-current of thousands who feared God more than man. He gave the key-note and lead in the anthem of the redeemed. Ten thousand times ten thousand have joined him, and these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

CHAPTER XVI

VANITY OF LIFE.

Terram teris, terram geris,
Et in terram reveteris,
Qui de terra sumeris.
Cerne quid es, et quid eris ;
Modo flos es, et verteris
In favillam cineris.

Bernard of Clairvaux.

LIFE is not to be estimated by the calendar. The man who can bring no other proof but gray hairs does not prove that he has lived, but that he has stayed a considerable time on earth ; and on the other hand, in a short term of years there may be a long and valuable life. We fall quite too far short of the great design of probation by sitting and sighing over the vanity of terrestrial existence. There is something more positive for man to accomplish.

" 'Tis infamy to die and not be missed,
Or let all soon forget that thou didst ere exist."

Away with the plea that you have no talent

for benevolent efforts, no opportunities for extensive usefulness. What if the hyssop that springeth out of the wall should say, there is no use in its growing because it is not the cedar of Lebanon? What if the moon should go into perpetual eclipse because she is so much smaller than the sun, and can give no light of her own?

But when the present is compared with the future, and man with his Maker, then do the great men and the great things of earth shrink into littleness. There was a monarch who exclaimed, Behold thou hast made my days as a handbreadth! and my age is as nothing before thee; verily every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. His son and successor maintained, as the result of ample experience, Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

It is natural to suppose that the elevated position and weighty affairs of monarchs and princes, must continually invest life in their view with momentous importance; but it appears that many of them have felt with peculiar force the insignificance and insecurity of their greatness. Saladin, a moment before breathing his last, called the herald who had carried the banner before him in all his battles, and ordered him to fasten to the top of the lance, the shroud in

which he was soon to be buried. "Go," said he, "carry the lance, unfurl the banner, and while you lift up this standard, proclaim, This is all that remains to Saladin the Great, the conqueror and king of the empire, of all his glory."

Severus, who had been raised from an humble station to the sovereignty of the Roman world, declared, "I have been all things, and it amounts to nothing." Philip III., of Spain, as he approached the close of life, desired as his last act, to see and bless his children. He told particularly the prince, his successor, that he had sent for him "That he might learn the vanity of crowns and tiaras, and learn to prepare for eternity."

The princess Amelia, daughter of George III., a short time before her death, penned the following lines :

"Unthinking, idle, wild and young,
I laughed, and danced, and talked, and sung ;
And proud of health, of freedom vain,
Dreamed not of sorrow, care or pain ;
Concluding in those hours of glee,
That all this world was made for me.
But when the hour of trial came,
When sickness shook this trembling frame,
When folly's gay pursuits were o'er,
And I could dance and sing no more,
It then occurred how sad 't would be,
Were this world only made for me."

It is not strange, then, that in harmony with such sentiments on the part of princes themselves, others should often point a moral at their expense. A Sultan once observed a dervise sitting with a human skull in his lap, and engaged in a profound revery. The Sultan demanded what he was meditating upon. "Sire," said the dervise, "this skull was presented to me this morning, and from that moment I have been endeavoring in vain to discover whether it is the skull of a powerful monarch like your Majesty, or of a poor dervise like myself."

Statesmen, as well as others who have figured in public life, have added their testimony. Taking leave of his friends, Sir Philip Sidney said, "Behold in me the end of this world and all its vanities." Sir John Mason said to those standing round his bed, "I have seen the most remarkable things in foreign parts, and been present at most state transactions for thirty years together; and have learned this, after so many years' experience, that seriousness is the greatest wisdom, temperance the best physic, and a good conscience the best estate; and were I to live again, I would change the court for a cloister, my privy councillor's bustles for a hermit's retirement, and the whole life I have

lived in the palace for one hour's enjoyment of God in the chapel. All things forsake me but my God, my duty and my prayers."

Lord Chesterfield, the elegant and voluptuous devotee of pleasure, never penned an equal amount of truth in the same compass, as when he wrote thus : " I have seen the silly rounds of business and pleasure, and have done with them all. I have enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, and consequently know their futility, and I do not regret their loss. I appraise them at their real value, which is, in truth, very low; whereas those who have not experienced always overrate them. They only see their gay outside, and are dazzled with their glare; but I have been behind the scenes. I have seen all the coarse pulleys and dirty ropes which exhibit and move the gaudy machines; and I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which illuminate the whole decoration, to the astonishment and admiration of an ignorant audience. When I reflect back upon what I have seen, what I have heard, and what I have done, I can hardly persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry and bustle, and pleasure of the world had any reality; but I look upon all that has passed as one of those romantic dreams which opium commonly occasions; and I by no means desire

to repeat the nauseous dose, for the sake of the fugitive dream. Shall I tell you that I bear this melancholy situation with that meritorious constancy and resignation which most people boast of? No; for I really cannot help it. I bear it because I must bear it, whether I will or no. I think of nothing but killing time the best way I can, now that he has become mine enemy. It is my resolution to sleep in the carriage the remainder of the journey."

How many are arrested by death in the midst of unfinished undertakings! Thus was it with Mohammed II., a Sultan of the Turks; and the inscription on his tomb reads: "I proposed to myself the conquest of Rhodes and proud Italy." Joseph II., of Austria, exclaimed in bitterness of soul, on his death-bed, that his epitaph should be, "Here lies Joseph, who was unsuccessful in all his undertakings!"* "Behold," said Cuvier, on his death-bed, to a friend, "behold a very different person to the man of Tuesday — of Saturday. Nevertheless, I had great things to do. All was ready in my head: after years of labor and research, there remained but to write: and now the hands fail, and carry with them the head."

* Quite in contrast with his dying words were those of Septimius Severus: *Adest, si quid mihi restat agendum.*

Between ten and eleven o'clock at night, Frederick von Schlegel was preparing a lecture for the series then in progress of delivery by him at Dresden. He had previously spoken of time and eternity; he was now treating of the different attainable degrees of knowledge, and commenced a sentence thus: "But the consummate and perfect knowledge"—and there sickness arrested his pen.

"Oh! what is death? 'Tis life's last shore,
Where vanities are vain no more."

If the lives of those who enjoy most of consideration and conspicuity, appear to themselves and to others but vanity, the general truth will have few to gainsay it. But as was intimated at the opening of the chapter, the estimate is to be made with regard to the great end of life. So far as that end is secured, nothing is vain. No one, therefore, living in obscurity, or laboring under bodily or mental weakness, may draw any dispiriting inference from the theme of this chapter. Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. One has, it may be, but a solitary plant to cultivate; another has a garden, and another a wide domain. God requires only that which is appropriate to each in his

condition, but somewhat of fruit he requires of every one. No one may base a palliating plea for remissness upon his unfavorable situation. There are some plants peculiar to caverns and ruins; some are found on the verge of the volcano, and in the midst of sulphurous exhalations; while some flourish far down beneath the surface of the ocean. It is well known, too, that plants may grow not only on the borders of hot springs, but in the very midst of those waters which might be expected to destroy them. Others have lived for years surrounded and covered by snow. A delicate hue and perfume may be found in the flower that skirts the Alpine glacier, while the fruits of Lapland, though few, have as fine a flavor as those of more genial climates.

So, too, may a successful husbandry of the soul be maintained any where, and something may be done for others, also, in any part of the great field, which is the world. Away then, be it reiterated, with all idle excuses for not engaging efficiently in self-cultivation, and in tilling some portion, however unpromising, of the Master's vineyard. Toiling there, your labors in the Lord will not be in vain, and in that way alone, can the characteristic vanity

of human life be contradicted. Talk not of the waves and billows that go over your head; talk not of the fiery furnace in which God has placed you; talk not of your isolated position, or of apathy and coldness that reign around you: "sow to the Spirit" where you are, and you "shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Shrink from no required effort, however cheerless, but if God bid you, go

"And plant successfully sweet Sharon's rose,
On icy plains, and in eternal snows."

CHAPTER XVII.

CERTAINTY OF DEATH.

*Sed omnes manet una nox,
Et calchanda semel via lethi.*

Horace.

IN 1698, John Asgill of London, published a treatise on the possibility of avoiding death. What study, what experiments have there been to discover the elixir of life, which should

secure a terrestrial immortality! Paracelsus, the prince of alchemists, boasted he had made such extraordinary attainments in the occult science, that he could render a man immortal; yet he could not prolong his own life even to the common limit, for he died before forty-seven years of age.

Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever? Enoch was indeed translated that he should not see death; Elijah, without dying, went to heaven in a chariot of fire; but more, like Lazarus and the daughter of Jairus, have died twice than have not died at all.

One of the Caliphs, named Mohammed, when about to die, ordered his troops, his court, and all his treasures to pass before him, and having surveyed them, he said, "How is it possible that a power so formidable as mine, is not able to diminish the weight of my disorder one single grain, or to prolong my life only for a moment!" No, the man has not yet lived, who amassed wealth enough to bribe Death, or purchase even an hour's respite. There are no eyes in those sockets to be dazzled by gold.

The great destroyer has no respect for rank. The monarchs of England are crowned beneath the same roof which covers the dust of their

predecessors ; and in one part of the Escorial—the palace of the kings of Spain — is the royal cemetery. It is a beautiful incident which Addison recites from the Travels of Sir John Chardin. A dervise, travelling through Tartary, being arrived at the town of Balk, went into the king's palace by mistake, thinking it to be a public inn or caravansary. Having looked about him for some time, he entered a long gallery, where he laid down his wallet, and spread his carpet, in order to repose himself upon it after the manner of Eastern nations. He had not been long in this posture, before he was discovered by the guards, who asked him what was his business in that place ? The dervise told them he intended to take up his night's lodging in that caravansary. The guards let him know in a very angry manner that the house was not a caravansary, but the king's palace. It happened that the king passed through the gallery during this debate, and smiling at the mistake of the dervise, asked how he could possibly be so dull as not to distinguish a palace from a caravansary. "Sir," said the dervise, "give me liberty to ask your majesty a question or two. Who were the persons that lodged in this house when it was first built ?" The king replied, his ancestors.

"And who," says the dervise, "was the last person that lodged here?" The king replied, his father. "And who is it that lodges here at present?" The king told him it was himself. "And who," says the dervise, "will be here after you?" The king answered, the young prince, his son. "Ah," said the dervise, a house that changes its occupants so often, and receives such a perpetual succession of guests is not a palace, but a caravansary.*

There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war. Death is an enemy who never capitulates, and the standard of that king of terrors is the oriflame, the signal that no quarter is given. When Siward, Duke of Northumberland, in the eleventh century, found death approaching, he ordered himself to be clothed in a suit of complete armour; then sitting erect upon

* "Quoi donc," exclaimed Louis XV.,—when dauphin to his reverend preceptor, as some book he was reading mentioned the death of a king—"Quoi donc, le Roi meurentils!" "Quelque fois, Monseigneur," was the reply.

The Dauphin's *Horatius Dephini* would have given a different answer.

Pallida mors equo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres.

his couch, with a spear in his hand, he observed, "In this posture, the only one worthy of a warrior, I will meet the tyrant; if I cannot conquer, I shall at least face the combat."

But every chieftain is forced to surrender. Nero would sometimes throw stones into the air in defiance when it thundered; and the natives of Namaqua-land now shoot their poisoned arrows at the lightning in order to arrest the destructive fluid. Equally preposterous are attempts at resisting death; he is not to be brow-beaten, or diverted from his aim. "I strike my flag," were the last words of Commodore Hull. Mohammed, when near his end, affirmed, that the angel of death would not take his life without first obtaining his own permission; but the false prophet soon found he had no more authority over the angel than over the mountain which had declined obeying him.

The number annually removed from our race is thirty millions, making an average of about eighty thousand every day, and more than three thousand every hour. "Earth is but a tomb-stone." What is the sum of all human biography? Men have lived; they are dead. Strange, strange then, that there is no more wisdom! Strange that experience, grown gray, not with one century alone, but with ages, should have

so little authority in her voice ! Such indifference to an inevitable and momentous event would be comparatively pardonable, if the world had been standing only six, instead of six thousand years. In consideration of the want of past events to teach what we are taught, mercy spared the early patriarchs for centuries. Experience was then necessarily of slow acquisition ; history was waiting for them to furnish materials for record. Now her pages are filled with the universal bill of mortality.

" All slow, and wan, and wrapp'd with shrouds,
They rise in visionary crowds,
And all with sober accent cry,
" Think, mortal, what it is to die."

CHAPTER XVIII.

PROBATION.

The voice of nature loudly cries,
And many a message from the skies,
That something in us never dies :
That on this frail uncertain state,
Hang matters of eternal weight ;
That future life in worlds unknown,
Must take its hue from this alone ;
Whether as heavenly glory bright,
Or dark as misery's woful night.

Burns.

ALL are stewards, but alas ! how many are "wicked and slothful servants." How few bear in mind that not to use their talents is to abuse them ; that fidelity and as much fidelity is required of him who has but one talent as of him who has five. Unemployed, they are misemployed.

The servant who went and hid his talent in the earth did not embezzle or squander it. The conscientious hypocrite is such an upright man, he would not on any account have his integrity impeached. His master shall be no loser by him. He digs a hole so carefully, that neither he nor any one else need think of reaping any

benefit from that talent, till the master return. Then in self-complacent bitterness he comes to read a lecture to his judge. The churl berates his Lord as a hard master — another Pharaoh, grasping and grinding, demanding a crop where no seed had been cast, and laying his hand iniquitously upon that which did not belong to him. “And I was afraid” — I did not like to have dealings with such an unrighteous, overbearing man! But I have taken good care of your money, and here it is. He calumniates his master, and makes a subterfuge out of his calumny.

He who knew what is in the heart of man, intended that that unprofitable servant should represent, not merely those without, but many within his visible kingdom. Not a few bury their Lord’s money because he has given them only one talent. They cannot give for charitable purposes by pounds, and they do not like to give by pence; they cannot preach, and they do not like to exhort; they cannot excel in any department of labor, and they choose to take no part. They forget that a man is judged according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not; that every one is responsible only in that sphere, where God has placed him, and for those endowments God has given him.

Often do the persons of one talent say, if they had the property of the rich, or the tongue of the fluent, or the position of office bearers, they should certainly do something for their Lord. But would increased means bring increased fidelity? Is the man who proves unfaithful in a small trust, the one to whom we commit an important trust? It is easy to blame ministers and deacons, the rich and the educated, the ardent and the conspicuous; but let those of one talent remember that to his own master each one standeth or falleth, and that their one talent is in danger of being buried, not by the sloth of others, but by their own unfaithfulness. Many and pleasing indeed are the instances of activity among the less amply endowed; yet may it be suggested in all kindness whether it was wholly without design that from the three servants, Christ should employ the one with a single talent to illustrate unfaithfulness.

When Sir Thomas Smith, in the reign of Elizabeth, saw that death was at hand, he became deeply impressed. Sending for his friends the bishops of Winchester and Worcester, he entreated them to state to him from the Holy Scriptures, the plainest and surest way of making his peace with God; adding,

‘It is lamentable that men consider not for what they were born into the world, till they are ready to go out of it.’ When near his end, Sir Henry Watton often remarked, “How much have I to repent of, and how little time to do it in!”

When death takes place suddenly the infatuation of procrastinating becomes doubly evident. Nadab and Abihu, for instance, perished suddenly; and it was suddenly that one became a pillar of salt—transformed in a moment into her own tomb and monument. An expiring queen, who had not thought that death would come so unexpectedly, exclaimed, “O time, time! a world of wealth for an inch of time!” Salmatius cried out on his death-bed, “O I have lost a world of time!—time, that most precious thing in the world, whereof had I but one year more, it should be spent in studying David’s Psalms and Paul’s Epistles.” What is time?

“I asked an aged man, a man of cares
Wrinkled, and curved, and white with hoary hairs;
“Time is the warp of life,” he said; “O tell
The young, the fair, the gay to weave it well.”

“I asked a dying sinner, ere the stroke
Of ruthless death life’s golden bowl had broke;
I asked him, What is time? “Time,” he replied—
“I’ve lost it: Ah the treasure!—and he died.”

It was a beautiful thought in some one to advertise: "Lost yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, as they are gone forever." In the great earthquake which destroyed the city of Carraccas in 1812, with forty thousand inhabitants, the clock of the cathedral was stopped, as is supposed, by the first shock. The tower, in which the dials are placed, one fronting each quarter of the heavens, remained standing. Although the clock has been repaired, and set going again, one of these dials and its hands have never been disturbed. They still point to the hour and minute which heralded so many thousands of souls without warning into eternity. According to this, *twenty minutes past four o'clock, P.M.* was the moment of the first shock.

Bishop Newton died in the act of winding his watch.* The watch which was in the pocket of the late Rev. Dr. Armstrong, when he perished in the steamer Atlantic, was afterwards recovered. It was stopped at thirty-three minutes past four,

* A passenger on board of the Sheffield, when all were in momentary expectation of perishing, drew his watch from the force of habit, with a view to wind it; but instantly the thought arose, that he had no further use for time, and the watch was immediately returned to its place.

and was so much injured by the rust, that it will not move again. And what does that mute monitor teach ? " This I say, the time is short ; it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world, as not abusing it ; for the fashion of this world passeth away." God gave emphasis to these words by that disaster, the emphasis of winds and raging billows. What fearful sarcasm was in that storm ! The new and splendred steamer ! Its praises had been widely trumpeted ; all admired the floating palace ; it challenged entire confidence. But its richness and commodiousness availed nothing against the breath of the Almighty. The anchors dragged ; signals of distress were made, but no human being could reach the spot, and the thousand life-preservers, in one form and another, on board, were of no service.

That was the day of annual thanksgiving extensively in New England. Many thousands were rejoicing at their happy homes — every heart a full gushing fountain of joy, all looking for other years of plenty and cheerfulness. Little did they dream of the chill and terror of

those, between whom and death there was but a cable's length.

" Ah ! little think the gay, licentious, proud,
Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround ;
They who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,
And wanton, often cruel riot, waste ;
Ah ! little think they, while they dance along,
How many feel this very moment death,
And all the sad variety of pain ;
How many sink in the devouring flood,
Or more devouring flame ; how many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery ; sore pierced by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty."

Reader, you and I are on a voyage, and whatever the name of our bark, it is not far from a fatal reef. Possibly even now one strand alone keeps us back from the unseen world, and it may be, from the horrors of utter darkness. He who bade the raging sea be still, now bids us hasten to him. Now is the accepted time — not when the mingled wrath of wind and waves shall assail us, — but now. Have you a hope that is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast ? If you were now on board that steamer, a few yards only between it and the fearful lee-reef, would you, like that man of God, gather the trembling passengers around you, and commend them to the omnipotent Saviour ?

CHAPTER XIX.

PENITENT.

Oro supplex, et acclivis,
Cor contritum quasi cinis,
Gere curam mei finis.

Dies Ira.

AUGUSTINE died reading one of the penitential Psalms.

Archbishop Usher often said he hoped to die with the language of the publican in his mouth. His wish was fulfilled, for his last words were, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Dr. Donne, upon taking final leave of his friends, remarked to them, "I repent of all my life, except that part of it which I spent in communion with God, and in doing good."

The last hours of Le Fevre were peculiar. He and other learned men, whose conversation was sought by Margaret of Navarre, were one day dining with her. In the midst of the entertainment Le Fevre began to weep. They asked the reason, and he replied that the enormity of his sins threw him into grief; not that

he had been guilty of debaucheries and the like, but he regarded it a great crime, that having known the truth, and taught it to persons who sealed it with their blood, he had the weakness to keep himself in a place of refuge, far from those quarters where the crowns of martyrdom were distributed. The queen exerted herself to comfort him, but he retired to his bed, and a few hours after was found a corpse.

Richard Mather, in his last sickness, when any one asked him how he did, usually answered, "Far from well, yet far better than mine iniquities deserve."

It was at Rostock that Grotius was overtaken by a mortal sickness. When the Lutheran clergyman in attendance, with the fidelity due to every dying man, reminded him, on the one hand of his sins; and on the other, not of his own merits, which were celebrated, but of the grace of God in Christ, as the sole method of salvation, and of the publican who laid hold of that method, Grotius answered, "I am that publican," and so expired.

The circumstances of archbishop Cranmer's execution are well known, but his last prayer is not so familiar to all. "O Father of heaven, O Son of God, Redeemer of the world, O Holy

Ghost, three persons and one God, have mercy upon me, most wretched caitiff and miserable sinner. I have offended both against heaven and earth more than my tongue can express. Whither then may I go, or whither shall I flee? To heaven I may be ashamed to lift up mine eyes, and in earth I find no place of refuge or succor. To thee, O Lord, do I run; to thee do I humble myself. O Lord, my God, my sins be great, yet have mercy upon me for thy great mercy. The great mystery that God became man was not wrought for little or few offences. Thou didst not give thy Son, O heavenly Father, unto death, for small sins only, but for all the greatest sins of the world, so that the sinner may return to thee with his whole heart, as I do at this present. Wherefore have mercy on me, O Lord, for thy great mercy. I crave nothing for my own merits, but for thy name's sake, that it may be allowed thereby, and for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake. And now, therefore, O Father of Heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come," &c.

When the fagots were lighted, he stretched out his right hand, which had signed the recantation, into the flames, and there held it firmly till it was burnt to a coal. This took place before his body was reached by the fire, and he

continued to repeat, "This unworthy left hand," "This unworthy right hand," interspersed with, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Evident sincerity characterized the recitation of Cranmer, nor can any one reasonably doubt that he died a true penitent. In complete contrast is that of La Fontaine. The following is the document he signed upon his sickness: "It is but too public and notorious that I had the misfortune to compose a book of infamous tales. In composing it I had no idea of the work being so pernicious as it proves to be. My eyes have been opened, and I confess it is an abominable book; and I am most ashamed that I ever wrote and published it. I ask pardon of God and the Church for having done so. I wish the work had never proceeded from my pen, and it were wholly in my power to suppress it. I promise solemnly, in the presence of God, whom I, though unworthy, am going to receive, that I will never contribute to the impression or circulation of it; and I renounce now and forever, all profit from an edition which I unfortunately consented should be published in Holland." He did not die immediately, and in spite of his vow, he wrote additional tales. His was similar to the case of Lulli, who died a few years previously, and

who also performed public penance like La Fontaine, though with a more deliberate hypocrisy. At the request of his confessor he burned the music of an unperformed opera. A prince asked him, a few days after, how he could be so silly as to destroy charming music, at the desire of a drivelling Jansenist. He replied, "Hush, hush monseigneur; I know what I did—I have another copy." He, however, did penance again, afterwards, and died with a halter around his neck, singing the hymn, "Sinner, thou must die," with tears of remorse and agony.

But penance is not repentance. The sharp crucifix, the torturing garment, the painful and mortifying posture and pilgrimage may be resorted to, and the heart be as far from contrition as ever. In enlightened Christian communities, extreme monkish or heathenish austerities may not be practiced, but the feeling which leads to voluntary suffering does often exist. This is the popery of the natural heart. Instead of the whip that draws blood, a mental scourge is employed. Not unfrequently do awakened sinners become spiritual flagellants, and hence comes not a little of moaning and sighing, and the expressed fear that the unpardonable sin has been committed. But all this is a self-righteous effort to move or to merit divine com-

passion ; it is not godly sorrow for sin, but attempted satisfaction for sin ; it is impenance.

Nor does mere regret, however deep pungent, constitute evangelical repentance. "I am come," said Cardinal Wolsey to the abbot and monks of Leicester, "I am come to my bones among you." He immediately retired to his bed, from which he never rose. "O, I but served my God," he cried, "as diligently as I have served my king, he would not have deserted me in my grey hairs." A short time previous to his execution, Sir Thomas Seymour wrote thus : "Forgetting God to love a man hath been my rod ;" yet, in the words of the executioner, "he died very dangerously, irksome and horribly."

Nor is remorse the essence of penitence, otherwise Rodolphus need not have died in despair. Pope Gregory had pretended to transfer to him the dominions of Henry, emperor of Germany, but the pontifical benediction was of little avail to him, for the usurper fought the battle, fighting against his lawful sovereign. Holding up his hand, which had been wounded in the engagement, to his captains, he said : "You see this hand with which I swore allegiance to Henry. But Gregory induced me

break my oath, and usurp an unmerited honor. I have received this mortal wound in the hand with which I violated my obligation."

The closing scene in the life of that monster, Bishop Gardiner, is full of instruction and horror. On the day of Ridley's and Latimer's martyrdom, he waited with impatience for the account of their burning, having arranged that messengers should be despatched to inform him as soon as the pile was set on fire. He delayed sitting down to dinner, till he received the desired intelligence. About four o'clock an express arrived with the welcome news, and Gardiner sat down to dinner. While at table he felt the attack of a mortal disease, the effect of vices in which he had long indulged; and though for some days afterwards, he was able to go out and attend Parliament, his illness rapidly increased, until it became scarcely possible to get any one to come near him. The sufferings of his mind were not less painful than those of his body. He frequently exclaimed, "I have sinned like Peter, but I have not wept like him." These torments he endured longer than Ridley had suffered, lingering in this state for three weeks, during which time he spake little but blasphemy and filthiness,

and gave up the ghost with curses in his mouth, in terrible and inexpressible torment.*

Distress, alarm, and horror have nothing salutary, much less anything saving in their nature. The deluge brought terror, but a terror that ended in destruction, to the antediluvians. So will it be on the morning of the resurrection. To be terrified is one thing, to be humbled is another. It is one thing to quail and flee at the sight of the flaming sword, and another to draw near and kiss Messiah's sceptre. When the King's arrows are sharp in the hearts of his enemies, they must writhe, yet their convictions may prove only the antechamber of hell—a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.

* Life of Ridley, in *British Reformers*.

CHAPTER XX.

FORGIVING.

- The sandal-tree perfumes, when riven,
The axe that laid it low ;
Let man who hopes to be forgiven,
Forgive and bless his foe.

Sadi. Translated by Sir Wm. Jones.

AN old writer remarks, "When any have provoked you, you say you will be even with them ; there is a way not only to be even with them, but above them, and that is to forgive them." One of the best of heathen moralists wrote, "It is the first office of justice to hurt no one—except first provoked by an injury." This is the ethics of the natural heart. In the pagan code, this sentiment is found universally, and it harmonizes also with Rabinic morality—love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.

Christian love is something quite different in its nature and manifestations. It does not merely prompt one to refrain from retaliation, for Satan may do that, and so may the most wicked of men, from mere motives of policy. All the passions of the pit may rage in the

bosom of one whose countenance has been schooled into an unvarying smile. True, self-government, though it extend no deeper than the muscles of the face is desirable, and though resentment be not extinguished, it is well that it be not suffered to flame forth from the eyes, and the tongue. But the new commandment requires something more than that.

Forgiveness of enemies is not the exhibition of mere good nature. Some have a great deal of native gentleness. They love to think well of every one. Habit has made it easy for them to speak favorably of all. It costs them no effort to forget an injury, and their universal good mood makes it a pleasure to do favors. Enemies, even, sometimes come in for a share in this liberal regard. Such a temperament is desirable indeed, but physical causes have more to do with it than moral. Its connection with Christian principle is not so intimate as with good cheer. Religious worth cannot be ascribed to it any more than to the fine weather and generous diet upon which in a measure it often depends.

Wishart had something more than good nature. At his martyrdom he prayed: "I beseech thee, Father of heaven, forgive them that have, of any ignorance, or else of any evil mind,

forged lies upon me. I forgive them with all my heart. I beseech Christ to forgive them that have condemned me to death this day ignorantly." The executioner desired his pardon, and Wishart bade him come to him, and kissing his cheek, said, "Lo, here is a token that I forgive you."

The virtue of forgiveness does not imply insensibility to injuries. There may be an indifference of that kind arising from depraved callousness, or proud contempt, and in both cases it is entirely foreign to a Christian temper. To refrain from resentment, because no occasion for resentment is perceived, is no very commanding virtue. It is when the sensibilities are most lively, and most deeply wounded, that the greatest demand is made for the exercise of forbearance. Louis II., of France died of grief occasioned by the revolt of his son Louis, of Bavaria, yet the broken hearted father said, as he expired, "I forgive Louis; but let him know he has been the cause of my death."

Nor does forgiveness of enemies imply approbation of their conduct. That would be criminal, so far as their conduct calls for forgiveness. The strongest reprobation of an individual's actions may be expressed in the same breath which breathes an acceptable prayer for him.

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The Earl of Argyle said upon the scaffold, "I freely forgive all men their wrongs and injuries done against me, as I desire to be forgiven of God." A person repeated his words louder to the people, adding, "This nobleman dies a Protestant." The earl then stepped forward and said, "I die not only a Protestant, but with a heart-hatred of popery, prelacy, and all superstition whatsoever." "There is one feeling," said Dr. Thomas Scott on his sick bed, "which I cannot have if I would. Those that have opposed my doctrine, have slandered me sadly, but I cannot feel any resentment. I can only love and pity them, and pray for their salvation. I never did feel any resentment towards them. I only regret that I did not more ardently long and pray for the salvation of their souls."

John Rogers was asked by the sheriff at the place of execution, if he would recant his opinions. Rogers replied, that what he had preached, he would seal with his blood. Then, said the sheriff, thou art a heretic. To which the martyr replied, "That shall be known at the day of judgment." "I will never pray for thee," said the sheriff. "But I," replied his prisoner, "will pray for thee."

On the other hand, thousands leave the world in the most violent anger, or deadly revenge.

What a diabolical rage of passions is exhibited on the battle field! With what feelings have multitudes fallen in single combat! Not unfrequently has excessive anger itself been the immediate or the procuring cause of death. Such was the case with Valentinian I., with Wincellaus, emperor of Germany, with Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, and a long list of others who might be mentioned. Can anything be more appalling than for the soul to return, in a fiend-like passion, to him who gave it?

CHAPTER XXI.

HOLY INDIGNATION.

Salve Sancta Justitia!

THE emperor Maximilian, whenever he passed the place of public execution, was accustomed to uncover his head, and exclaim, "Hail, holy Justice!" An approving apprehension of this divine attribute is essential to piety. In this, as in other points, there must be an assimilation to the character of God, and it is perfectly consistent with all that love

to enemies, and forgiveness of them which the Saviour requires. The imprecations of David were not prompted by a feeling of revenge; such language in the Psalms being the expression of a legitimate feeling. David looked upon his cause as identified with that of his Lord, and he regarded the display of discriminating justice in his behalf as indispensable to vindicate the divine character. God's faithfulness to reiterated promises and threatenings was at stake. Those petitions were only an appeal to Jehovah to display his avowed regard, respectively, to those who honor and those who dishonor him. The same characterizes all who love God in his entire character; and such only love him at all. Many a martyr in his dying hour, has deeply felt and fully expressed the same. Such was Mollio, an Italian reformer. On the eve of being tortured, he addressed the Inquisitors thus: "You thirst without ceasing for the blood of the saints. Can you be the successors and vicars of Jesus Christ—you who despise Christ and his word; you who act as if you do not believe there is a God in heaven; you who persecute unto the death his faithful ministers, make his commandments of no effect, and tyrannize over the consciences of his saints? Wherefore I appeal from your sentence; and

summon you, cruel tyrants and murderers, to answer before the judgment seat of Christ at the last day, where your pompous titles and gorgeous trappings will not dazzle, nor your guards and torturing apparatus terrify us."

Similar was the case of Ludovico Paschali, a Piedmontese in the last half of the sixteenth century, who suffered incredibly from the Inquisitors. At the place of execution he was allowed to make a short address, when he solemnly summoned the Pope and cardinals who were glutting their eyes with his torments, "to appear before the throne of the Lamb, and give an account of their cruelties." Just before that he had said to his brother, "I give thanks to my God that in the midst of my long continued and severe affliction, I have found some kind friends, and I thank you, my dearest brother, for the tender interest you have taken in my welfare. But as for me, God has bestowed on me that knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, which assures me that I am not in error; and I know that I must go by the narrow way of the cross, and seal my testimony with my blood. I do not dread death, and still less the loss of my earthly goods; for I am certain of eternal life, and a celestial inheritance, and my heart is united to my Lord and Saviour.

Among the French martyrs, at this period of the Reformation, was Schuch. On trial, he looked his judges boldly in the face, and denounced against them the judgments of God. When the sentence that he should be burnt alive, was communicated to him, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and mildly answered, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." On his way to execution at Nancy, in passing by the convent of the Cordeliers, Father Bonaventure, pointing to the carved images over the gateway, cried out, "Heretic, pay honor to God, his mother and the saints!" "O hypocrite," replied Schuch, "God will destroy you, and bring your deceits to light."

Patric Hamilton, a Scottish martyr, nobly connected, when the fire was kindled around him, cried with a loud voice, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. How long shall darkness overwhelm this land? How long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men?" One of the Black Friars, who had feigned a love for the gospel, cried out, "Convert, heretic; say *Salve Regina*." Hamilton answered, "Depart, and trouble me not, thou messenger of Satan. Wicked man, thou knowest the contrary, and the contrary hast thou confessed to me. I cite

thee to appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ."

John Cornford, one of the last five martyrs who suffered in the times of bloody Mary, when the sentence was to be passed upon that band of Protestants, in behalf of them all pronounced this excommunication: "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the most mighty God, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, and the authority of his holy and apostolic church, we do hereby give into the hands of Satan, to be destroyed, the bodies of those blasphemers and heretics that maintain any false church, or feigned religion; so that by this, thy just judgment against thy adversaries, thy true religion may be known to thy great glory, and our comfort, and to the edifying of all our nation;—Lord Jesus, so be it!"

CHAPTER XXII.

CHRIST PRECIOUS.

Christus — mel in ore, melos in ore, et psan in corde.

Augustine.

SEVEN disciples of our Lord were fishing on the sea of Galilee. Their night of toil was one of disappointment too. At the dawn of day, Jesus, standing on the shore hailed them, and inquired after their success. The beloved disciple was the first to recognize him, and to communicate the fact to Peter, when that ardent son of Jonas immediately girt his coat about him and plunged into the sea. He could not wait for the prize of fishes to be rowed ashore but leaving net, boat and all, he swam to the land. His Lord he must welcome and honor. He who had thrice denied his Master, can now reply to the thrice repeated challenge, "Lovest thou me?" — "Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." He is now ready indeed to die with him or for him. He actually seals his sincerity by martyrdom. It was in

sympathy with him that Paschali, amidst the pangs of a baptism in fire and blood, declared, "It is a small thing to die once for Christ; if it might be, I could wish I might die a thousand times for him."

Whatever the feelings and conduct may have been in health and ease, it is not amidst the waves of the last dark passage that the professed believer renounces his Lord. Whether he be fisherman or nobleman, Jew or Greek, then especially does Christ seem all in all to him, and he exclaims with a later distinguished convert from Judaism, *Vivat Christus; pereat Barrabbas!* — or with Lambert at the stake, who raised his hands while flames were streaming from his fingers' ends, and cried in his last breath, "None but Christ!" "None but Christ!" Julius Palmer, after his head had dropped like those of his fellow martyrs, and all supposed him dead, suddenly raised it again amidst the flames, and articulating, — "Sweet Jesus," then fell asleep. Brown of Haddington in the quiet of his chamber of sickness and death, broke forth, "O that I had all the world around me, that I might tell them of Christ. Had I ten thousand tongues and ten thousand hearts, and were employing all in commendation of Christ, I could not do for his honor what he hath de-

served." "O what must Christ be in himself, when he sweetens Heaven, sweetens Scripture, sweetens ordinances, sweetens earth, and even sweetens trials."

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

"Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought."

"Till then I would thy love proclaim,
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death."

When the intelligent and warm-hearted believer speaks of love to Christ, he does not mean regard for a character merely, or for a mere historical personage, as Joseph the son of Jacob, or John the apostle. Alexander might be enamoured with the fictitious heroes of the Iliad, and Julius Cæsar with the exploits of Alexander; but the conceptions thus formed, and the sentiments thus awakened, do not answer to the attachment now spoken of. We believe in a personal Saviour, a living Saviour, one present to

the soul and cognizant of all its exercises, between whom and believers there is a real fellowship. Whom, having not seen, they love. The Christ of our hearts is not an idea, an abstraction, a something or somebody indeterminate, and existing and influencing only as our several fancies may picture him ; but a real, speaking, affectionate friend, standing here on the shore of time, to whom we, like Peter, hasten that we may embrace and commune with him. None but an ardent love to him is appropriate, or is recognized by him as even genuine. Whoso loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. Attachment to him must be paramount and controlling, bringing into captivity every other affection and passion. One sun in the heavens, one Saviour in the soul, is all that either requires or could endure. His true disciples, toward whom in life and at death, he stretches out his hand recognizing them as brethren and sisters, are those who find in him more than all they find in the entire circle of earthly kindred and acquaintance. Whatever in these relations and attachments is to be renounced for him, they renounce ; the rest they dedicate to him. George Carpenter, a Bavarian witness for the truth in the sixteenth century, when asked if he would not gladly return

to his wife and children, and the opportunity of doing so was offered upon condition of recanting, replied, "My wife and my children are so dear to me they cannot be bought with all the riches and possessions of the Duke of Bavaria; but for the love of my Lord God I willingly forsake them all." Still stronger was the testimony of another martyr, when, under similar circumstances, he was inquired of, "Do you not love your wife and children?" — "Love them! Yes, if all the world were gold, and at my disposal, I would give it all for the satisfaction of living with them, though it were in prison; yet in comparison with Christ, I love them not." The death bed of Bishop Beveridge was beautifully illustrative of the same. He could not recognize his friends. A minister, with whom he had been on intimate terms, coming in, inquired, "Do you know me?" "Who are you?" said the bishop. Being told who it was, he said he did not know him. The same was repeated to another individual, who had been equally well known. His wife then came to his bed-side, but he still inquired, "Who are you?" It was answered, "Your wife," but he did not know her. "Well," said one of the company, "Bishop Beveridge, do you know the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Jesus Christ!" he ex-

claimed, as if charmed back to full consciousness, "Oh! yes, I have known him these forty years; precious Saviour, he is my only hope!"

This attachment is not one of given strength, which attaining to a definable point on the graduated scale of holy affection, meets the demands of our Lord, and may thenceforth remain stationary. It must be progressive. Christ is a being never to be compassed or exhausted by finite hearts, in this world or the world to come. Every new discovery serves only to heighten wonder at his excellencies — excellencies that will forever rise and brighten to the believer's view. That indwelling fulness of the Godhead — all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him; that mystery of mysteries — Christ's atoning love, which took the sinner's place under the penal wrath of God; his mediatorial mercy as advocate, and mediatorial supremacy as King, make him an object whose glories eternity even, can never fully unfold. The Christian, so long at least as he remains on earth, never seems to himself to have an adequate conception of the adorable Redeemer, or an adequate affection for him. "I care not," said Ignatius just before his martyrdom, "for any thing visible or invisible, so that I may obtain Christ. Let fire, the cross, the attack of

beasts, the breaking of my bones, tearing of my members, grinding of my whole body, and the torments of devils come upon me, so that I may win Christ." There he was, sacrificing all he possessed, suffering incredibly, and on the eve of a cruel death for his love to Jesus; yet such were his views of Christ's worth, that he seemed not to know or love him at all.

No other principle than this strong attachment to Christ is adequate to meet the demands he has ever made for self-sacrifice in his cause; and nothing else is so much needed now, when on the one hand, there is such worldliness in the church, and on the other, such unwonted urgency of calls upon her to arise and press forward over sea and land, wherever the voice of her Lord is heard. Too many seem to be swayed by the opinion that Christianity is a mere convenience for getting them comfortably to heaven, and that all this ardor of love, and this cross-bearing existed and were appropriate only in primitive times. But has the brightness of the Father's glory in Jesus Christ been waning these two thousand years? Has his authority been weakened, as in the decrepit governments of this world? Have the coffers of man's redemption been getting low in times of social bankruptcy? Ah, ye worldly, ye easy,

sin-loving professors, this constraining love of Jesus was not peculiarly an apostolic privilege or obligation. Whenever and wherever a church has existed, there have been assured disciples who could reply with Peter, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that we love thee." Let the words of John Mollio, from an Italian prison, dwell on your minds. Although towards the close of life that martyr did not mention the name of Jesus without shedding tears, yet he often wept bitterly in secret, confessing to a friend, "O, it grieves me that I cannot bring this heart of mine to love Jesus Christ more fervently!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

DYING IN THE LORD.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When mine eye-lids close in death ;
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold thee on thy throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee !

Toplady.

THE early Bohemian Brethren, in their confession of faith, speak thus of Justification: "This sixth article is accounted with us the most important of all, as the sum of all Christianity and piety. Wherefore our divines teach and handle it with all diligence and application, and endeavor to instill it into all." One of the English reformers, Balnaves, remarks: "Above all things the said article is to be holden in memory, recent among the faithful; and at every time and hour driven and inculcated in their ears, as it were by a trumpet." The saying of Luther is familiar to all, that with this the church stands or falls, and that "to lose the article of justification is at the same time to

se the whole system of Christian doctrine."

was upon this that he wrote and preached more than upon anything else; and, indeed, the apprehending in his mind of this central truth as the dawn of the Reformation, and the promulgation of this truth the chief means by which that mighty movement was carried forward. The re-affirmation of it merited all the exertions, all the martyrdoms of that era; it is worthy of the bonds, stripes and starvation persecuted Armenians at the present time; and is worthy of every Red Sea through which God may yet conduct his chosen ones in their Exodus from the bondage of formalism. If anything in the evangelical scheme be characteristic, it is this. There are many things about which it is comparatively safe to err; but to err essentially here will distort the whole system of Christian belief, and introduce a disastrous element into religious experience. "Justified solely by the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone," is the doctrine to live by and die by. John Brown, of Hadington, when the hour of his departure was at hand, said; "The gospel is the only source of my comfort; and every sinner is as welcome as

How pleasant that neither great sins nor great troubles can alter these consolations."

"The finished righteousness of Christ is the only foundation of my hope. Ever since God dealt savingly with my heart, I have never had any comfort in the thought that my sins were small, but in the belief that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." "Is this dying?" exclaimed Dr. Goodwin, "is this what for so many years I have been dreading? Oh how precious does the righteousness of the Saviour now appear! I never could have imagined that I should have had such a measure of faith at this hour. No, I never could have imagined it. My bow abides in strength. Is Christ divided? No; I have the whole of his righteousness. I am found in him; not in my own righteousness which is of the law, but in the righteousness which is of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, who loved me and gave himself for me. Christ cannot love better than he doth. I think I cannot love better than I do: I am swallowed up in God." Among the last words of Thomas Holyburton, that flaming seraph on earth, were, "Free grace, free grace—not unto me."

The divine plan of salvation is in direct contrariety to every plan which introduces human merit as a ground of acceptance. All true believers admit this, and when they pass from a state of condemnation, they desist from reliance

upon their own doings. Boasting is excluded, for **there** is an entire exclusion of personal merit, **from** the reasons which induce God to bestow pardon. The believer does not receive Christ as an ally, an auxillary in obtaining justification ; Christ's merits cannot be appropriated as subsidiary, and with a view to fill up the deficiency of man's merits, and justification through faith in Christ alone, is a precious reality to the child of God, living or dying. In the last sickness of Ruthurfurd, a friend spoke to him of his useful ministry, but he cried out, " I disclaim all — the port I would lie in at is redemption, and forgiveness of sins through Christ's blood."

Thomas Hooker, as one who stood weeping by his bed-side observed to him, " Sir, you are going to receive the reward of all your labors," raised himself and replied, " Brother, I am going to receive mercy." David Dickson, professor of divinity at Edinburgh, being asked how he found himself, answered, "I have taken my good deeds and bad deeds, and thrown them together in a heap, and fled from them both to Christ, and in him I have peace." When near his end, Dr. Thomas Scott received a message from Rev. D. Wilson, a valued friend, in which was an allusion to the benefit his labors had been to the church. " Now this,"

said Dr. Scott, "is doing me harm. *God be merciful to me a sinner*, is the only ground on which I rest. If I am saved, God shall have all the glory."

"Just as I am — without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come !

"Just as I am — and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come.

"Just as I am — thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down ;
Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come."

CHAPTER XXIV.

TRIUMPHANT.

With awe, around the silent walks I tread ;
These are the lasting mansions of the dead :
" The dead !" methinks a thousand tongues reply,
" These are the tombs of such as cannot die !
Crowned with eternal fame, they sit sublime,
And laugh at all the little strife of time."

Crabbe.

LIFE is a struggle, a conflict. In each of the kingdoms of nature, man is continually carrying on aggressive movements. Hills are levelled, and valleys filled. Embankments are thrown up to tell the ocean, " Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be staid," while the elements are all subsidized and impressed by man into his service.

In human society the same is literally and constantly true. Family and neighborhood broils, private combats, and war offensive or defensive, civil or international, make up the substance of history. The hidden life of the believer is also a warfare; " Fight the good fight of faith." When therefore, in the closing

scene, there is an overcoming faith, it is natural that it should find utterance in corresponding language. John Knox, shortly before his end, uttered heavy groans and deep sighs. The bystanders supposed him to be already in the pains of death ; but recovering himself at length, he said, " Many have been my conflicts with Satan, in the course of my frail life, and many the assaults which I have sustained ; but that roaring lion never beset me so furiously and forcibly as now. Often has he set my sins in array before me ; often has he tempted me to despair ; and often strove to ensnare me with the enticements of the world ; but I being enabled to hew his snares in pieces with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, he was not able to prevail against me. But now he has found out a new way. That crafty serpent has endeavored to persuade me that because I have faithfully and successfully discharged my ministerial office, I am on that account deserving of eternal life and happy immortality. But God was pleased to make me triumphant over this temptation also, by powerfully suggesting to my memory those texts, What hast thou that thou didst not receive ? and, By the grace of God I am what I am, — and Not I, but the grace of God in me. I thank my God through Christ,

who hath vouchsafed me the victory ; and I am persuaded that Satan will not be permitted to return or molest me any more in my passage to glory ; but I shall without any fear of body or agony of soul sweetly and peacefully exchange this wretched life for that blessed and immortal one, which is through Christ Jesus."

Similar, in some respects, was the case of Joseph Alleine. His final conflict seemed to be with Satan rather than with death ; " Away, thou foul fiend, thou enemy of all mankind, thou subtle sophister. Art thou come now to molest me ?—now that I am just going ?—now that I am so weak, and when death is upon me ? Trouble me not for I am none of thine. I am the Lord's, and Christ is mine, and I am his—his by covenant ; I have sworn myself to be the Lord's, and his I will be. Therefore, begone." These words he often repeated, " Begone, begone."

So too, Caspar Schade, a fellow laborer of Spener in the 17th century, after having, in his last sickness, gone through a vehement inward combat, cried out, " Victory ! victory ! I have fought with devils, and conquered them. Oh, let us sing eternal hallelujahs !"

The reformers of the sixteenth century, and nearly all eminent Christians have thought and

spoken much concerning the agency of evil spirits. It is one of the unfavorable symptoms of our times that this doctrine is not only in theory, but to a much greater extent practically discarded. This is sufficiently evinced by the infrequency with which it is made the subject of public or private remark, and from the general levity with which it is regarded when once introduced. Too seldom do we hear any mention of the name or operations of the Arch-apostate, except as a fashionable expletive in merry conversation. Civilization, so called, is doing wonders, but it may do too much. It performs an acceptable office by disabusing the public mind, in regard to spectral illusions, and the whole system of witch-craft; but its services are more than questionable when it renders a community too enlightened to believe what revelation teaches concerning satanic agency.

It is not, however, merely and directly with the Great Adversary, that dying believers have to wrestle. The last words of Dr. Finley, president of the college of New Jersey, were, "After one or two more engagements the conflict will be over." The day preceding that of his death, he exclaimed, "I shall triumph over every foe! The Lord hath given me the victory. I exult,

I triumph. O that I could see untainted purity. Now I know that it is impossible that faith should not triumph over earth and hell." To one inquiring how he felt, he replied, "Full of triumph. I triumph through Christ. Nothing clips my wings but the thought of my dissolution being prolonged. O that it was to-night! My very soul thirsts for eternal rest." What would the reckless Duke of Buckingham have given for such an assurance? His confession was, "I have lived in doubt, and I die in uncertainty." Miserable captive of Satan!

More than conqueror was John Pistorius. When he suffered martyrdom at the hands of Papists in Wittemberg, he submitted his neck willingly to the band with which he was to be strangled before being burned; and with an unfaltering voice cried out, "O death, where is thy victory?" Bartoccio, an Italian martyr in the Reformation, marched with a firm step to the place of execution, and while the flames were enveloping his body, was heard to the last shouting, "Victory, victory!"

Such a departure is a translation rather than dying; it is not a passage through the dark valley, but a mounting over it. It is a spectacle to make us pause, when we thus behold a believer triumphantly assured that his corona-

tion has come ; when we find a fellow mortal passing from the midst of flames to the Paradise of God, from his couch of suffering to a throne in heaven.

“ Victory ! victory ! ” It has rung over many a battle-field ; the wounded and the dying have often shouted it ; but their eyes were not looking heavenward. That exclamation, in the mouth of a Christian hero, has an incomparably higher import. The soldier of earth fights, at best, on an uncertainty, and for a temporary triumph. Victory sometimes proves scarcely better than defeat, and sometimes a dear-bought disaster. But to the Christian warrior, there is certainty ; and to all the persevering, there is a pledge of glory and honor ; To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne. There will be no more battle of the warrior, with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood. The soldier’s sandals, his rent and soiled attire, shall be exchanged for the livery of heaven. “ I go,” said Napoleon, “ to plant my eagles on the walls of Lisbon.” But where is now that emperor ? Where are the thrones he raised, and the brothers he seated on them ? We go to a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God ; they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.

CHAPTER XXV.

CHRISTIAN FIRMNESS.

Come one, come all; this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I

Scott.

CHANGE, by local motion, spiritual growth, and in other respects, was designed to be a law of our being, and, in itself considered, this is no occasion for regret. Nor is it, considering the design of the divine government over this world, an occasion for regret that there is so much of mutability around us. Looking at the procuring cause of all disorder, and at the primitive and disciplinary character of God's dealings with us, we must admit that it is well there is an impress of his just displeasure upon the whole world,—well that human life, health and possessions are as frail as they are. It is a blind and silly sentimentalism which moves about, exhausting itself in merely sighing over faded flowers and newly raised tombstones.

But there is an instability over which all eyes may well weep, that of human excellence

—the frailty of sound principles and good resolutions. Let poetry heave her sighs as she contemplates the seared and fallen leaf, or a once lovely countenance, from which the lines of beauty are fast vanishing; religion deplors the loss of God's image in the soul, and its faintness and fickleness when once restored.

Firmness of character, in general, stands opposed to pliancy, to that yielding quality which readily swerves in regard to principles, opinions and practices. As a member of the commonwealth, the Spartan, as a philosopher, the Stoic, were firm. So were Regulus and many another Roman, and many a counterpart of theirs, in modern times.

Christian firmness is the same quality, formed and sustained by Christian principle. It has a respect to religious opinions and actions, and is that spiritual strength of character which is manifested by constancy in the performance of scriptural duties, and in the habitual maintenance of decided Christian feeling and deportment. Obviously, this trait has no necessary connection with harshness, or any thing else repulsive, but is perfectly consistent with everything amiable, lovely, and of good report. Indeed, without this, what would otherwise be an ornament ceases to be so, just as when the

allar is stricken down, the graceful vine which clings to it, loses its attractiveness.

The man who has an elastic conscience, or a chameleon-like conscience, has, of course, a doubtful character. True, there are cases of doubt, which involve no want of moral energy. The hesitating then lies in the judgment, not in the conscience; for only make it clear to a person thus undecided what he ought to do, and his decision will not linger. But the vacillation which is fatal to Christian firmness arises from a defect in principle. Where that exists, conduct depends not upon a ready and safe determination of the will but upon the strength of temptation, and the concurrence of outward circumstances. Remember Lot's wife.

Peter was apparently very decided; he was certainly very confident: Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee: but Peter failed in constancy. Painfully frequent is it that men are more fickle in their good purposes, than in their fashions of dress, and multitudes are guided by the weather-cock rather than the compass. Like Peter they always suffer for their inconstancy, and usually much worse than he.

At Orleans, in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, those Protestants who had apostatized

through fear, were placed by the Papists in the fore-front of their companions with weapons in their hands, and compelled to make the first onset upon the Protestants who had remained true to their faith. The Papists would cry, "Smite them, smite them; are they not your holy brethren and sisters?" and if any refused, they were at once cut down. So too in 1742, a priest, with some others, drew forty or fifty Protestants of Glasgow back to the church of Rome, and then, assuring them they were safe in the true faith, yet fearing they might turn heretics again, presently cut the throats of the whole company.

The ultimatum of folly on the one hand, and satanic malignity on the other, would seem to have been reached in the case of an Italian, who, having his enemy in his power, told him there was no way to save his life, except by renouncing his Saviour. The wretched being at once denied Christ, when the other immediately stabbed him to the heart, saying that he had double revenge, for he killed at once both soul and body!

He only who endureth unto the end shall be saved. It is not the flower called morning-glory that we most admire, but the rose which diffuses its sweetness, and blushes on all day,

and all night too. The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. How few move in that bright ecliptic! If cases of absolute apostacy from Christian faith and character be not frequent, cases of culpable pliancy are frequent. Many a faint-hearted professor forgets that death only can terminate the spiritual warfare in which he is engaged. Though cast down, we may not once dream of being destroyed, but manfully fight on. The true Christian soldier, like Spartacus, when wounded must fight upon his knees, covering himself with his buckler in one hand, and wielding his sword in the other.

Every reader will be reminded, by contrast of Julian, who was the prince of apostates. No monarch can rival him in the fame of making it the policy of an entire reign to exterminate the religion he once professed. Every thing which stratagem, satire, and state-prudence, aided by regal power, could accomplish, he accomplished. During his minority he avowed a zeal for Christianity, while secretly imbibing the superstition of paganism. By day he would pray to Christ, by night to Mercury. Thus equipped with malice and hypocrisy he came to the throne, and at once

set himself to repairing heathen temples and altars. Christ he sneeringly called Mary's son, the Galilean. But at length, in the Persian war, he received a death-wound, and filling his hand with blood, is said to have tossed it in the air, exclaiming, "Galilean, thou hast conquered." Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed?

To many it may seem strange, if not contradictory; nevertheless, inspiration declares, and the hidden life confirms it.—When I am weak, than am I strong. Religious stability of purpose, and constancy of affection are not attainable without divine aid, but that aid is never sought or enjoyed where there is a feeling of self-confidence. It is in the believer's conviction of utter weakness that God's strength is made perfect. Self-reliance is needed in secular life; in the spiritual life, self-distrust. The hope of assistance from on high is an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast; but let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. Saunders, whose martyrdom has already been spoken of, in the early part of his course was acquainted with one Dr. Pendleton, an earnest

reacher in the reign of Edward. Upon the accession of Mary to the throne, they met in the country, and consulted upon what was best to be done. Saunders confessed that his spirit was willing, but that his flesh was too weak to endure the threatened suffering. Pendleton admonished him, and appeared very courageous and forward to face any peril, but not long after his heroism and faith all forsook him, while Saunders bore the cross manfully.

The Prince of Conde, when taken prisoner by Charles IX. of France, and being put to his choice whether to go to mass or be put to death, or suffer perpetual imprisonment, made the noble reply, that, "By God's help he would never choose the first, and for either of the latter he left it to the king's pleasure and God's providence."

Eminently is Christian firmness called for in the belief and maintenance of truth. Not a few are tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine; but such bond servants of the wind are a reproach to Christendom. Whether they will move in the right direction or not, whether they stand or fall, depends upon the courtesy of the next blast. But when sentiments are promulgated and movements made — and were there ever more of such

than now? — wholly unauthorized by the Word of God, then, surely, should Christian firmness be seen; then should the “sacramental host,” contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and without wavering, maintain a sober, consistent, gospel order of things. Charity is one thing, apathy another; meekness is one thing, pusillanimity another. Let any Shimei whatsoever throw stones and curse; let the seven vagabond sons of Sceva undertake to adjure by that Jesus whom Paul preacheth, still ought we to stand fast. In the depth of Christian humility, but with the firmness of Christian martyrdom, must we resist. Christian meekness and Christian inflexibility, form a bulwark, which, if anything can, will make the heretical, the schismatical, and the arrogant quail. *Athanasius contra mundum*, was a noble protestation. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil. Justness of opinion, and safety of conduct are not determined by the census.

Who was ever known to acquire peace, respect or even permanent temporal prosperity by becoming recreant to his principles? How often has speedy retribution overtaken the apostate? In the third century, Nichomachus, after enduring torture for a time, at length abjured

his faith, crying out, "I am no Christian," and was released. But no sooner had he sacrificed the idol, than he fell into greater agonies and immediately expired. In the Marian persecution, Sir John Cheek, who had been tutor to Edward VI., was confined in the Tower. The only alternative presented him was to forego, either life, or liberty of conscience. He chose the latter; but his spirits were soon broken down by shame and remorse, which brought him speedily to the grave. In the seventeenth century, William Cowper, sometime minister of Perth, Scotland, changed his ecclesiastical connections, at the expense of his integrity. He was suddenly seized with alarm, and soon after died in great anguish of spirit, pointing to the ground, and crying out, "A fallen star! a fallen star!" A guilty conscience is the worst of tormentors. There were false prophets among the people, who brought swift destruction upon themselves.

Many a heathen might have shamed them into fidelity. When the emperor Vespasian commanded Fluidius Priscus not to come to the senate, or if he did, not to speak anything offensive to himself; the senator rejoined, that as he was a senator, it was fit that he should be at the senate-house; and if being there, he

were required to give his advice, he should speak freely whatever his conscience bade him. The emperor then threatened death. He answered, "Did I ever tell you that I was immortal? Do what you will, I shall do what I ought. It is in your power to put me to death unjustly, and in me to die with constancy." Yet more noble was the reply of Chrysostom, when the empress sent him a threatening message; "Go tell her, I fear nothing but sin!" More noble still, was the reply of the three ancient non-conformists; "Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego answered and said to the king; O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and will deliver us out of thy hand, O king! But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Not long since, the evangelical Armenians at Ada Bazar, in common with their brethren elsewhere, were sorely harrassed by their enemies. Early in the Protestant movement at that place, they wished to communicate with the missionaries at Constantinople, but were so beset with hostile ecclesiastics, they feared to

send an ordinary messenger. Hence they despatched by the hands of a Jew, a small piece of paper, on which was written in the Turkish language and Hebrew characters, this brief message, "Death, but no turning back : we are twenty." The constuction which the missionaries put upon it — and it was the right one — was that twenty had resolved to die rather than disown their attachment to the gospel.

"Death but no turning back !" Is that my profession ? Have I counted the cost ? "Death, but no turning back !" Am I ready for confiscation, for the bastinado, for the noisome dungeon ? Is it my choice to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ? — "Yea, I count not my life dear unto me ; Yea, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee !" — So responds the believer who has learned to do all things through Christ strengthening him.

CHAPTER XXVI

BREVITY OF LIFE.

Like to the falling of a star,
Or as the flight of eagles are ;
Or like the fresh Spring's gaudy hue,
Or silver drops of morning dew ;
Or like the wind that chafes the flood,
Or bubbles which on water stood ;
Even such is man, whose borrowed light
Is straight called in, and paid to-night.

The wind blows out, the bubble dies ;
The Spring entomb'd in Autumn lies ;
The dew dries up, the star is shot ;
The flight is past, and man forgot.

Henry King, 1657.

It would be difficult to find a theme more hackneyed than the shortness of life. Ancients and moderns, the pagan and the Christian, the poet and the philosopher, have dwelt upon it. Every funeral calls it up afresh ; it is the burden of every epitaph. As for man, his days are as grass, as a flower of the field so he flourisheth ; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more. The scriptures abound in similitudes of the same purport. Life is likened to a cloud,

to the vapor, to a shadow, to a single breath, to the weaver's shuttle, to the hurrying post, and to the eagle's flight. It was well in the ancients that they represented Time with wings.

Even cases of longevity serve to render the general fact more impressive. The celebrated Thomas Parr is called, in the chronicles of those times, "The old, old, very old man of Winnington, in the parish of Alderbury, in Shropshire, who was born in the reign of King Edward the 4th, in 1483. He lived one hundred and fifty two years, nine months and odd days, and departed this life at Westminster, November 15th, 1635."* And yet his life probably appeared to him, upon review, as much a dream, as in the case of any other man.

The life of every one is short, compared with the whole period of human history. Looking back through the range of the past only, we see that threescore years and ten, are a very inconsiderable portion of the whole. The days of the years of my pilgrimage, said Jacob, are an hundred and thirty years; few an evil have the

*Longevity seems to have characterized his descendants, as a son of his lived to the age of 113, a grandson to 109, and a great-grandson to 125. John Rovin, also, who lived one hundred and seventy-two years, had at his death, a younger son aged 117 years.

days of the years of my life been ; and have not attained unto the days of the years of my fathers. He sighed at the brevity of one whole century and a third part of another, in comparison with antediluvian lives, some of which fell not far short of a thousand years. But what is even this to the existence of Him, in whose sight a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night! Future life, even in its farthest extension, will retain its relative insignificance.

But this I say, brethren, the time is short. Everything rapid and evanescent is the symbol of man's earthly existence. Our life is the fire-fly's spark, the darting meteor, the snowflake alighting in the stream, a taper borne about in the storm. The lightning flash is God's portraiture of the beholder's life. What use then should be made of this familiar, yet impressive fact? Not to complain of it, or idly sigh about it. Life is long enough for our duties, long enough for all who will, to get ready for heaven.

Most persons are far more anxious about living long than living well, and are more affected by the shortness than the folly of their lives. Xerxes could weep as he surveyed the immense host before him, and reflected that a hundred years from that time not one of them would be

living, and yet without remorse or further consideration, could lead on those same millions to their destruction. So it is with all mere sentimentality on this subject; it never reformed any man's character, or prepared any one for eternity.

Of all who are born, one fourth die the first year, and two-fifths only attain to six years of age. Still mourning parents should not say of them, that they die before the time. So far as relates to the wisdom and purposes of God, there can be no untimely deaths. No fond father or mother in affliction should say that an opening flower has faded; the Lord of this domain has seen fit to pluck it in its freshness and tenderness, because he did not choose to have it wait till it should wither. Are not these young plants taken from this field of thorns to the garden of God? Is there not every reason to suppose that through the mediation of Christ, and the Spirit's renewing agency, dying infants are immediately prepared for blessedness?

Do not say then, that you have lost your children; they are found by your heavenly Father; they are cared for in other and better mansions. The shorter their stay here, the longer their residence there. What if they lost a few moments of joy? they have also lost years of sorrow.

What if the King has seen fit to take back some of the jewels, the smaller jewels, which he had loaned to his servants, shall they complain? What if the little star that twinkles faintly in the western horizon sink suddenly from our view, does it not rise on other worlds, and shine more brightly there as a morning star?

"I have had six children," said John Eliot, "and I bless God for his grace, they are all either with Christ, or in Christ; and my mind is at rest concerning them. My desire was that they should have served Christ on earth; but if God will choose to have them serve him in heaven, I have nothing to object to it. His will be done." Yes, his will be done; that is the chief consideration. The great point is not that they have escaped the ills of life, the pains, the storms, the buffetings, the assaults of Satan and the influences of corrupting companionship; but God has taken them away, and therefore it is all for the best; his will be done. The excellent Arch-bishop of Cambray, when his royal pupil, the young Duke of Burgundy died, remarked, "If there needed no more than to move a straw, to bring him to life again, I would not do it, since the divine pleasure is otherwise." Surely, if God trusts us with children, shall not we trust him with them?

CHAPTER XXVII.

FRAILITY OF LIFE.

"As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth."

As a flower of the field—not of the garden, well cared for, protected against rude blasts, against every careless foot and all destructive insects—but as a flower of the field, far more exposed,—“for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone.” The very slightest causes, and of these there is an infinitude, are sufficient to occasion death at any time. Æmilius, to whom a statue had been decreed, lost his life by merely hitting his foot against a door-post; and Aufidius lost his by stumbling against the consul’s chamber door. Lucia, a sister of the emperor Aurelius, while playing with her little son, was wounded fatally in her breast by a needle. Anacreon was choked with a grape; Tarquinius Priscus with a fish-bone; Fabius with a hair; and Adrian IV. with a fly. It was merely a slight draught of wine that carried off Cassimere II., king of Poland. Tamerlane

could raise himself to the throne, march in triumph to the Euphrates and the Ganges, win the title of Terror of the World; and yet be arrested by a simple ague in the midst of his conquests.

Those who practice the healing art can do but little for themselves or others, toward obviating the frailty of life. They, too, have no power over the spirit, to retain the spirit. Gas-sendi, perceiving that the motion of his heart grew faint, laid the hand of his amanuensis upon it, and said, "You see what human life is!" Yes,

" Art is long, and time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave."

And what does this frailty teach? To abate all undue anxiety about the continuance of that which is so frail, to lead the soul in holy admiration to Him who is the Ancient of days, the Rock of Ages. If each, like Damocles, were to turn his eye to the sword suspended by a single hair above him, how would it moderate his zest for the riot, the revelry, the amusements—all the vanities of earth.

Even emotion, when excessive, often causes

death. Chilo, of Sparta, died while embracing his son, who was victor at the Olympic games; and under similar circumstances also, Diagoras of Rhodes. His three sons were all crowned as victors, the same day; one as a pugilist, one as a wrestler, and the third in both capacities. The sons carried their father through an immense crowd of spectators, who threw flowers by handfuls upon him, loudly applauding his good fortune; but amidst these congratulations he died in the embraces of his sons. Livy recites the case of an aged matron who, after extreme distress at the tidings of her son's being slain in battle, expired in his arms, from excess of joy upon his return.

Arthur, Lord of Lisle, died of sudden joy at his liberation from imprisonment. When Leibnitz's house was explored, after his death, such quantities of money were found hoarded in sacks, that the wife of his nephew, who possessed his property died of joy at the sight. Chrysippus, Sophocles, Publius Crassus, and Philistion of Nice, died severally in a fit of laughter. Marcus Juventius expired when the senate decreed him honors, and Conrad in the midst of his triumph, after the conquest of Italy. The door-keeper of our Congress dropped dead upon hearing of the surrender of

Cornwallis; and at Athens, when the citizens were anxiously waiting to hear the result of an engagement, a messenger arrived and shouted: "We are conquerors," and at once expired. An Athenian stage-player swooned beyond recovery, while his fellow-actors were crowning him with golden chaplets because he had acted his part so well.

Other actors have died suddenly from overwrought emotions of a different kind. Mondory, personating the character of Herod in the *Meriamne* of *Tristan*, felt the character so powerfully that it cost him his life. So too, Bond, acting a part in the tragedy of *Zara*, when addressed by the chief personage was found dead in his chair.

Eminent public speakers have not unfrequently died in the midst of an impassioned burst of eloquence, or after the deep emotion which produced it had subsided. Mr. Pinckney, of Baltimore, Mr. Emmet, of New York, and Hon. Ezekiel Webster, of New Hampshire, are among such instances.

Diodorus, the logician, fell dead because he could not answer an argument publicly propounded to him. A young Flemish painter of promise, died of despair on seeing one of the *chefs d'œuvres*, of Raphael; and the same was

true of Lagrave, a young Parisian, when he heard that the musical prize for which he had competed was adjudged to another. The news of a defeat killed Philip V. One of the Popes expired in an overpowering emotion of the ludicrous, upon finding his pet monkey robed in the pontificals. Louis Vives mentions a Jew in France, who rode in the dark over a dangerous bridge, on which was only a single plank ; but the next day seeing the danger he had escaped, he immediately fell dead. Plautius threw himself upon the lifeless body of his wife, and breathed out his own soul.

If the prayer be a wise one, Give me neither poverty nor riches, equally wise is it to pray for exemption from the extremes of emotion. The golden mean of feeling is among the rarest and most valuable attainments. It is an enviable self-control not to feel great surprise at anything. Who will not pronounce it a sublime acquisition to be able uniformly to take such a view of things, and so to trust in God, as shall prepare for any event ? Who would not long and labor for such holy equanimity ?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE.

Certa mors, incerta hora.

WHO has access to the scroll of God's purposes? Who can tell when the fatal arrow will be sped? It will be perhaps to-day, perhaps to-morrow; it might have struck its victim a month ago, it may be delayed a month to come. An occasional announcement has been made, as to Hannaniah, *This year thou shalt die*; or as to the rich man, *This night thy soul shall be required of thee*; but such were extraordinary cases. No one knows which pulsation will be the last. Haller, the celebrated physician, though he died feeling of his pulse, was in doubt till it actually ceased. Perceiving that it grew fainter and fainter, he turned to a brother physician, standing by, and said as he expired, "My friend, the artery ceases to beat."

"His years are three score years and ten." Most who are under seventy, seem to take this as a guaranty that they shall see at least that

period; while the uncertainty, constantly increasing with the advance of years, exerts a proportional influence upon very few if any. Owing, however, to a superstitious regard for the number seven, and for septenary combinations — particularly seven times nine — the sixty third year came to be called the Great Climacteric, and to be regarded as peculiarly hazardous, and especially to great men. Hence Augustus Cæsar, for instance, congratulated himself when that year of his life was past. Relics of the same notion are still met with. It is true that many distinguished men have departed this life in the Great Climacteric, as Aristotle, Demosthenes, Cicero, Hannibal, Constantine, Mohammed, Tertullian, Bede, Bernard, Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon; yet an extensive analysis of vital statistics would not probably show upon the whole, anything very peculiar in respect to that year.

A glance at the exposures to which all are subject, and also at the escapes which every one meets with, exhibits this uncertainty in a striking light. Bibulus, a general who had been successful in war, entered Rome in triumph; but as he was passing through the streets in great pomp, a tile fell from a house and struck him dead. Julius Cæsar was victorious in fifty

pitched battles; it is estimated that a million of those with whom he was at different times engaged, perished on the field. Yet he passed through all his campaigns unharmed, not receiving a wound; but at length in the heart of the capital, in the midst of the senate house, he received three and twenty stabs, either of which might have been fatal. Mr. Lehmanowsky, now laboring as a minister of the gospel in our Western country, was once an officer under Napoleon. He has survived the balls, bayonets, and swords of two hundred engagements; but in what unexpected moment, he will yet leave the world, is known only to Him who knows all things.

What then is so perfectly obvious as that there should be constant preparation — such an anticipation of the great change, that, strictly speaking, it can never come unexpectedly? Why should any one think it strange that an event occurs to-day or to-morrow, which might have occurred yesterday or the last year? Then let none burden future hours with duties belonging to the present, but let every setting sun find the account of stewardship ready for the Lord's inspection.

The son of the widow of Zarephath, and the son of the widow of Nain, were restored to life.

So was Lazarus, and the daughter of Jairus. Our Saviour too came from the tomb, and at the same time many of thy bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the grave, after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Such, however, are among the miraculous interventions of divine power, which probably will not be repeated till the one stupendous miracle shall summon all the dead from their graves, at the general resurrection. It remains none the less impressively true, that life is irrevocable. "Tears will not," Sir William Temple beautifully remarks, "Tears will not water the lovely plant, so as to cause it to grow again; sighs will not give it new breath; nor can we furnish it with life and spirits by the waste of our own." Brief, frail, uncertain as life is, it cannot be repeated.

It may be that some one of three score years and ten will peruse this page. You have seen, my friend, more than a thousand Sabbaths, and you have perhaps listened to twice as many thousands of sermons. How many the funerals you have attended! how many the admonitions God in his providence has addressed to you! But now the sand is getting low in your glass. The taper has burned down nigh to the

socket, and may be it begins already to flicker. Whatever may be the uncertainties attending life in general, there is certainty in relation to yours, that its remaining portion will be emphatically short. What deadness to the world is claimed of you! What maturity of love and faith! What diligence should there be in redeeming the time because the days are evil! The staff in your hand will not keep you out of the grave. Let it then, my friend, be ever in mind, that for you, most certainly, there is but a little way to the field of Ephron.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ETERNITY.

Crede, stude, vive aeternitati.

Cornel. a Lapide.

THE ancients deified Eternity, and employed various symbols which appear on their coins and medals. Such mementos, however, seem to have had very little influence upon them; and indeed, all artificial methods for keeping in

mind the flight of time, and the approach of eternity, usually avail but little. The emperor Mervanes had this motto engraved upon his seal, *Remember thou must die*, but he seems not to have been particularly mindful of his mortality. The same was true of a distinguished Italian, who adopted for his motto, *Time is my estate*; and many of the Chinese keep their coffins ready made in their dormitories, and yet scarcely believe in the immortality of the soul. Philip, king of Macedon, would have his page address him every morning, "Remember, O king, thou art mortal." Constantine, not only at his inauguration, but at his great feasts, ordered a mason to bring two stones before him and say, "Choose, O King, from which of these two thou wilt have thy tomb-stone made."

Among no class of poets are the ideas of death and the grave so familiar as those of Rome, and among no people were they so likely to be naturally conjoined and contrasted with pleasurable emotions. At funeral ceremonies, flowers were strewed as emblems of mortality. The mortuary festivals celebrated in the Spring, when sacrifices were offered to Pale Death, immediately followed those of Venus, in which nymphs and graces danced on the sward by moonlight, crowned with wreaths

of roses and myrtles. Whoever will examine the moral and convivial odes of Horace, for instance, will find frequent allusions to the shortness of life, and its closing scene ; and yet, with a view, in almost every instance, to excite to the greater enjoyment of the present hour.*

With a similar inconsistency, the Egyptians were accustomed to introduce a human skeleton into their feasts. All this, however, is but the symbol of a frequent internal paradox. The inclinations and the judgment in many a breast are in perpetual conflict. Cardinal Richlieu, as he approached the close of life, became very serious, and he made the following acknowledgment to Du Molin : " I have been urged into many irregularities by what is called the reason of State ; and as I could not tell how to satisfy my conscience for these deviations from rectitude, I endeavored to satisfy myself that there is no God, nor a future state, that I might quiet the upbraidings of my mind ; but my endeavors were in vain. " So strong was the idea of God in my soul ; so clear the impression of him upon the frame of the world ; so unanimous the consent of mankind ; and so powerful the con-

* Dunlop's Hist. of Rom. Lit

victions of my own conscience, that I could not avoid feeling the necessity of admitting a Supreme Being, and a future state ; and I wished to live as one that must die, and to die as one that must live forever." To another who inquired why he was so sad, he replied, "The soul is a serious thing ; it must either be sad here for a moment, or be sad forever." "O what a difference," said Martyn Hyperius, in the midst of the flames, "O what a difference is there between this and eternal fire ! Who would shun this to leap into that ?" The wretched Sir Francis Newport, among many exclamations indicating unparalleled mental agony, uttered these words : "O that I was to lie and broil upon that fire a thousand years to purchase the favor of God, and be reconciled to him again ! But it is a fruitless wish ; millions of millions of years will bring me no nearer to the end of my torments than one poor hour. O eternity ! eternity ! Who can discover the abyss of eternity ? Who can paraphrase upon these words, *forever and ever* ?"

Lipsius when dying, prayed thus to the Virgin ; "O mother of God, aid thy servant, struggling with a whole eternity, and leave me not in this hour, on which hangs the everlasting salvation of my soul !" Infatuated man, so to

postpone preparation; and still more in his last struggle to call upon Mary! Is the whole of life, supposing it to be three score years and ten, longer than is needful to get ready for eternity? How much of it is any one at liberty to throw away, assured that the remainder will suffice to make his calling and election sure? The inhabitants of Crotona were in the habit of giving invitations to their feasts a year beforehand, that the guests might be suitably prepared in attire and whatever else was important. Reader, does the summons for thee to get ready for eternity come too early? Will it take thee but an hour or two to make thy wedding garment ready? To one who was endeavoring to dissuade him from martyrdom saying, "O sir, life is sweet and death is bitter," Bishop Hooper replied, "Life to come is more sweet, and death to come is more bitter." The Inquisitors told Peloquine that his life was in his own hands; "Then," said he, "were it in ill keeping. Christ's school has taught me to save it by losing it; and not by the gain of a few days or years, to lose it in eternity."

Reader, do you so estimate loss and gain? Have you ever carefully considered the character and relation of this present stage of being? Have you ever set yourself to a sober consider-

ation of the fact that, like all around you, and all in past generations, you too must sooner or later die? Have you thought what will probably be the figures upon your coffin and your tomb-stone?

Have you pondered the fact that you are *not* to die? that your inner-self—all of you that thinks and feels—is deathless; that however soon or late the clay that is about you may fall away, you—your own self, the spiritual tenant—are immortal; that cease to think and feel, to enjoy or suffer, you cannot to all eternity? Have you ever weighed the point that the eternity of your existence will take its complexion from these passing moments, that if you play the spendthrift now, you will sink in everlasting bankruptcy?

Dr. Twisse, prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, said as he expired, “Now at length I shall have leisure to pursue my studies to all eternity.” While Dr. Finley was longing and constantly expecting to depart, a friend said to him, “You are now more vigorous and cheerful, Sir.” “Yes,” he replied, “I rise or fall as eternal life seems nearer or farther off.” “Welcome God and Father! Welcome sweet Lord Jesus! Welcome death! Welcome eternity! Amen”—were among the last words of John Tennent.

And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb! Yes, we will write, that they are blessed who thus die in the Lord; that they and they only are blessed who shall awake at the Bridegroom's approach, and entering in with the bidden thousands, shall raise rapturous shouts to the praise of him whose unending banquet they are to share. Many shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. Never mention Golconda or California again; never speak of thrones and diadems, of gala days and triumphs; the angel of the Apocalypse has bidden us write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

CHAPTER XXX.

RETRIBUTIVE CORRESPONDENCE.

In vulneribus nostris proprias agnoscimus pennas.

Melancthon.

THE relation of causes to their effects is permanent, and is the grand characteristic of the universe. The distinguishing peculiarity of man, compared with other intelligent beings, is a probation under a system of moral causes and effects, the decisive allotment according to exact distributive equity, being reserved till the close of probation.

Yet punishment and reward are in a measure dispensed in this life. Intimations are continually given of what the future will more fully, and either more dreadfully or more gloriously disclose. This moral seed-time is an earnest, a type of the harvest. Not only, however, does the general law hold good, that partially here and fully hereafter, God will render to every man according as character and conduct may be; but it is to a considerable extent evident, that this penal dispensations have a particular ref-

erence to the more prominent sins which occasion them.

Often does the closing scene vividly illustrate this. The Israelites inflicted upon Adoni Bezek the identical punishment which he acknowledged he had inflicted upon three score and ten kings; and his dying confession was As I have done, so God hath requited me. Haman was himself hanged upon the gallows which he had erected for Mordecai. The emperor Maxentius, after breaking down the *Pons Milvius* over the Tiber, caused another, a very frail one, to be constructed of boats, with a view to entrap Constantine. Being defeated in battle, he fled to his own bridge, which he had laid as a snare for his enemy. That giving way, he and a large number of his men were drowned.

The Caliph Mantaser had procured the death of his father. Some time after, looking over the rich furniture in the palace, he found among the various pieces of tapestry, one which had upon it the figure of a very beautiful young man, mounted on a Persian horse, with a circle of Persian characters around himself and his steed. The Caliph, charmed with the beauty of the tapestry, sent for one who understood the ancient Persian, and desired him to explain the inscription. The man read it, changed

color, and hesitated. The prince demanded with a threat an immediate interpretation. The man then told him that the inscription ran thus : " I am Siroes, the son of Chosroes, who slew my father to obtain his crown, which I kept but six months." This so affected Montaser that he died within two or three days, after having reigned about the same length of time as Siroes.

Pope Alexander VI., and his son Cæsar Borgia, in order to secure the wealth of certain cardinals, resolved to poison them, and accordingly invited them to dine. Before the guests arrived, owing to a mistake of the servant, they themselves drank the poisoned cup, of which the father immediately died. Often has the same murderous design been similarly defeated and rewarded. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

Pouchet, archbishop of Tours, made application to have a court erected, called *Chambre Ardent*, in which to condemn Protestants to the flames ; but soon after obtaining his request he was struck with a disease called the " fire of God," which began at his feet, and proceeded upward, with so tormenting a burning, that he was obliged to have one limb after another amputated, and thus in the utmost misery

ended his days. Sir William Banantyne, an actor in the religious persecutions of Scotland, in the time of Lauderdale, was afterwards killed at the siege of Grave, by a cannon ball, which drove his heart out of his body—a mode of death he had often imprecated upon himself.*

The question naturally arises whether this law of specific correspondence in the inflicted penalty, will be carried out in the future world. It is safe to say that to some extent, at least, it undoubtedly will. We should infer this from the nature of the human soul, whose character is so determined by its habits, and whose habits it is so difficult to change. Nor

* The Scotch have a proverb, *He that invented the Maiden, first hanged it*—that is, first suffered by it. The Maiden is a well known beheading engine, invented by James, Earl of Morton, who was the first victim of his own ingenuity. It is a remarkable coincidence that Guillotine, the French reviver of that instrument, shared the same fate; as also did Perillus, the Athenian. In order to ingratiate himself with the Tyrant Phalaris, whose delight it was to inflict strange kinds of torment, he presented that Sicilian murderer with a brazen ball, which being heated, and criminals placed in it, would roar, the human voice being completely disguised; but the inventor, instead of receiving the expected reward, was ordered by the Tyrant to be put into it, to make the first trial of his own art, and accordingly he was roasted to death.

are the Scriptures without confirmation of the same. We must then suppose that the general cast of soul formed here, will continue to mature hereafter; and that in the world of woe there will be such an adaptation of punishment as shall constantly remind the sufferer of those sins to which he was most addicted on earth. The transition from this world to the next can effect no essential change in character.

"What exile from himself can flee?
To zones though more and more remote,
Still, still pursues where'er I be,
The blight of life, the demon Thought."

It will be forever futile to seek self-oblivion. The final plunge once made, it will be vain to dream of arresting the downward progress. Many of the habits which have characterized individuals during this life, we must suppose will characterize them after death. The man renowned for cursing now, will continue in ceaseless imprecations, and by his awful volubility attain to corresponding eminence in the bottomless pit. The votaries of gaiety will find opportunities to engage in horrid merriment. The Pharisee will be heard still sounding a trumpet before him. Pride, envy, and jealousy will find full scope there; so too will anger

ambition and avarice.* Waking up in outer darkness, the inebriate finds

" Through his veins
Torture at once and immortality
A stream of poison doth the Amreta run,
And while within the burning anguish flows,
His outward body glows
Like molten ore ; under the avenging Eye,
Doom'd thus to live and burn eternally."

Those who have loved and defended error will find a judicial blindness still carrying them on in their vain sophistry. And it is quite conceivable that those, too, who have undertaken to reform the world by a new modelling of the social system, should still, in the lake of fire, maintain that all which is there endured is needless, and is the result of false relative positions and discipline of individuals, by which

* " The usurer
Is forced to *sup whole draughts of molten gold* ;
There is the murderer forever stabbed,
Yet he can never die."

The second line above may have been suggested to Ford, the author, by the treatment which the remains of Crassus received in derision of his avarice. After the battle of Charrae the head of that general was sent to the Parthian king, who poured melted gold down his throat.

See Notes to Southey's *Maid of Orleans*.

the harmony of their natures is disturbed, and their native predispositions thwarted; and that if all would adopt a new social regimen, a godless communism, the everlasting fires might be quenched. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HELL ANTICIPATED.

A VIOLENT fever seized his soul; the heavens
Above, the earth beneath, seemed glowing brass
Heated seven times; he heard dread voices speak,
And utter horrid prophesies of pain,
Severer and severer yet to come;
And as he writhed and quivered, scorched within,
The Fury round his temples flapped
Her fiery wings, and breathed upon his lips
And parched tongue the withering blasts of hell.
It is the suffering begun, thou seest,
In symbol of the Worm that never dies.

Pollock.

THE second death is sometimes experienced in part, before the first. In the midst of riot or crime, the heedless sinner sees, in the same hour, fingers of a man's hand come forth and

write upon the wall. Then like Belshazzar's, his countenance is changed, and his thoughts trouble him. The foretaste of wrath to the uttermost, the dread of death, and yet the fierce thirst for death, put the soul, if possible, into a worse condition than that of the lost spirits themselves.

Cotton Mather mentions a gamester who, after losing a considerable sum in vile company, fell into a horror of conscience, crying out repeatedly, "I am all on fire under the wrath of God;" "I am all on fire under the wrath of God." He went immediately and hanged himself.

The case of Francis Spira, is well known. No sooner had he renounced the truth, than he seemed to hear a voice addressing him, "Thou wicked wretch thou hast denied me, thou hast renounced the covenant of thy obedience, thou hast broken thy vow; hence, apostate, bear with thee the sentence of thine eternal damnation." From that time, as he protested with quaking, till death, he knew no peace of mind. He continued to affirm that the avenging hand of the Almighty was upon him, and that he knew he was utterly undone. "O that I were above God!" he would exclaim, "for I know he will have no mercy on me." He lay for about eight

weeks in a continual burning, receiving no food, except by force, and without digestion, till he became a perfect skeleton. He raged vehemently for drink, yet feared to live; he dreaded hell, yet coveted death; till finally consumed by horror, he ended his miserable life.

Perhaps the most remarkable case on record, is that of the Hon. Francis Newport, son of Lord Newport. He had been religiously educated, and till twenty one years of age, behaved so agreeably to his excellent training, that he was looked upon as a blessing and ornament to his family. At that age he commenced the study of law in London, and there fell into the company of those who corrupted his principles and morals, and he became exceedingly dissolute. Sickness at length overtook him. He found that free thinking had only silenced, not annihilated conscience and the dread of retribution. The ravages of what might seem the quickest consumption commenced; he threw himself upon a bed, and broke out into these expressions; "Whence this war in my breast? What argument is there now to assist me against matter of fact? Do I assert that there is no hell, while I feel one in my own bosom? Am I certain there is no after retribution, when I feel a present judgment? Do I affirm my soul

to be as mortal as my body, when this languishes, and that is vigorous as ever? O that any one could restore to me my ancient guard of piety and innocence! Wretch that I am, whither shall I fly from this breast? What will become of me?"

The passage was repeated to him, As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. "If God delight not," he replied, "in the death of sinners, it is such sinners as repent and turn to him; but his justice will vindicate itself on such obstinate sinners as me, who have denied his power and providence, both in my words and actions. Now he has met with me for it; and O! it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. If God was not against me, I should not care though all the power and malice of men were joined against me; though all the legions of hell continued to torture me with the consuming pains; but when an irreconcilable God looks down upon his creature in wrath, and consigns him over to eternal vengeance, this is intolerable, inexpressible! Ah, who can dwell with eternal burnings? Oh, ye who have any hope, that have not yet passed the day of grace, cry mightily unto God, day and night; think

no labor too great to secure you from the wrath of God. Oh, who can stand before him when he is angry! What stubble can resist that consuming fire!" This and more to the same purpose, he spoke with the deepest concern, the tears all the while trickling from his cheeks.

In a letter to an atheist acquaintance, who had written him during his sickness, he said, "That there is a God, I know, because I continually feel the effects of his wrath; that there is a hell, I am equally certain, having received an earnest of my inheritance there already in my breast; that there is a natural conscience, I now feel with horror and amazement, being continually upbraided by it with my impieties, and all my sins, brought to my remembrance. Why God has marked me out for an example of his vengeance, rather than you, or any other of our acquaintance, I presume is because I have been more religiously educated, and have done greater despite to the Spirit of grace."

Mental distress soon reduced him to a skeleton. Several of his relatives arrived from the country and found him in this situation. He said to them, "I am obliged in common civility to thank you all; but who are my relations?"

Our Saviour said, such as did the will of his heavenly Father were his relations. I may properly say that none but the atheists, the reprobate, and such as do the work of the devil are my relations. This little tie of flesh and blood will dissolve in a moment, but the relation I have with the damned is permanent. The same lot, the same place of torment, the same exercise of blasphemy, and the same eternity of horror will be the common lot of us all; so the similitude of torments, place and duration will join us in a very strict union."

Scepticism, such as Sir Francis Neport had indulged in, will resolve all this into superstitious melancholy. He was aware that his family friends who had arrived might possibly suspect him of not being in his right mind. "You imagine me melancholy or distracted; I wish I were either; but it is part of my judgment that I am not. No; my apprehension of persons and things is more quick and vigorous than it was when I was in perfect health; and it is my curse, because I am thereby more sensible of the condition I am fallen into. Would you be informed why I am become a skeleton in three or four days? See now then, I have despised my Maker, and denied my Redeemer; I have joined myself to the atheists and profane, and

continued this course under many convictions, till my iniquity was ripe for vengeance, and the just judgment of God overtook me, when my security was the greatest, and the checks of my conscience were the least."

Being asked later, how he did, " Damned and lost forever !" was the appalling reply. " True there is no contending. I wish there was a possibility of getting above God; that would be a heaven to me." He was entreated not to blaspheme, but he interrupted, saying, " Read we not in the Revelation of them that blasphemed God, because of their pains? I am one of their number."

Every passage of Scripture, or scriptural sentiment quoted to him, he would turn against himself. Prayer offered in his presence only heightened his distress. The last time that any one attempted it, he turned away his face, and made what noise he could, to hinder himself from hearing. " Tigers and monsters," he broke out, " are ye also become devils to torment me, and give me prospect of heaven, to make my hell more intolerable ? "

The tide of life was now fast ebbing, but in the horror of his soul there was no abatement. " God is become my enemy, and there is none stronger to deliver me out of his hands. He

consigns me over to eternal vengeance, and there is none able to redeem me. Was there such another God as he, who would patronize my cause, or was I above God, or independent of him; could I act, or dispose of myself as I pleased, then would my horrors cease, and the expectations and designs of my formidable enemies be frustrated. But, Oh! this cannot be, for I—.” His voice failed; he began to struggle, and gasp for breath; then uttering a groan, the most horrid imaginable, he cried out “Oh the insufferable pangs of hell and damnation!”—and expired.

Yes, there is a hell. “The wicked shall be turned into hell.” Nor is that state wholly future. Often, as in the foregoing instances, is there a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries. Before plunging into the lake, the soul of the incorrigible sinner finds itself encompassed by the flames it is fast approaching. Such a soul has been swayed by principles, and has cherished feelings too decidedly congenial to those of the nether world, not to have some earnest of its destination.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ANTICIPATING HEAVEN.

Vitalem vitam mors quum immortalis ademit.

Lucan.

“LET me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!” Then must you live the life of the righteous,—wholly to the Lord, now and forever—being your purpose. A compromise between Christ and Satan is not to be effected. Would you not give untold treasures to be assured of dying as cheerfully as many of whom you have read? How then did the martyrs, how do others prepare themselves for such a departure? Not at the theatre, not in the assembly room, not in the place of carousal, or at games of hazard. Unprofitable reading, neglect of the Sabbath, of prayer and meditation, were not among the means employed by them. Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they lived soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Dr. Nisbet, the first president of Dickinson College, in his last efforts at vocal utterance, articulated with peculiar fervor, the words, "Holy, holy, holy!" and with that exclamation on his lips, fell asleep. "Holy, holy, holy!" — he had caught the song of Seraphim, who rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come! Dr. Preston, one of the Nonconformist divines, expressed on his death-bed, the belief that he should experience a sudden change — "Not," said he, "of my companions — for I shall still converse with God and saints — but of my place and way of doing it." It is nothing new for such a man to find himself at his dissolution, in the presence of the Saviour. While previously the habitation was on earth, the heart was in heaven. The commencement of future blessedness often antedates the hour of death; and often does the believer see the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, and hears a voice saying, The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

At twenty two years of age, died H. S. Golding. "This," said he, "is no longer a foretaste;

this is heaven ! I not only feel the climate, but I breathe the ambrosial air of heaven, and soon shall enjoy its company. Can this be dying ? This body seems no longer to belong to the soul ; it appears only as a curtain that covers it ; and soon I shall drop this curtain, and be set at liberty." His last exclamation was, "Glory, glory, glory !" The mother of Philip Henry remarked, just before she died, " My head is in heaven, and my heart is in heaven ; it is but one step more, and I shall be there too." She had long lived above the world ;

"As some tall cliff, that rears its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm ;
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

Here is the secret of anticipating heaven in death ; it is to be heavenly minded during life ; to maintain a sanctified contempt of the world ; to prefer Mount Tabor to every other eminence ; to desire to tabernacle there, because there the glorious sun-light of a higher world shines full upon the face.

CHAPTER XXXIII

SOCIETY OF ANGELS

"Hark! they whisper — angels say,
'Sister spirit, come away.'"

Pope.

"And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Yes, Lazarus, the beggar, was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom! He whom the meanest servant of the rich man despised a moment before, blessing his stars that he was not such a poor, forlorn wretch—he whom a moment before none but dogs cared for, is now attended by angels. A convoy of mighty, holy, shining ones bear that beggar's soul up to the Paradise of God. And every believer finds, upon his departure, that they who had, invisibly and insensibly, been ministering spirits, now become visible guards, and his departing spirit is borne to its eternal rest by the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.

When Hugh Kennedy was dying, a friend said to him, "You have cause, Sir, to be assured

that the angels of God are waiting about your bed to convey your soul into Abraham's bosom;" and he replied, "I am sure thereof." Robert Ognier, who suffered martyrdom with his father at Lisle in the year 1556, cried out at the stake, "Behold millions of angels about us, and the heavens opened to receive us!" Like the young man with Elisha, his eye was opened to a view of their invisible guard, "and he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots round about."

"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place." Many a pilgrim, in approaching Jordan, finds a Mahanaim. The seen and the unseen, the temporal and the eternal are more closely linked, and have more intimate mutual bearings than we usually imagine. "We are a spectacle unto angels," and "God created all things by Jesus Christ to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God." It is not too much to affirm that the moral system which God is administering in this world, has a more important relation to other created intelligencies, than it has to the human race. How

intently, and with what holy solicitude must the unnumbered host above watch the unfolding of the great economy of grace, through God's successive dispensations! With how much of sympathy do they observe individuals struggling against temptations, and against inward as well as surrounding corruptions! With what benignant joy do they mark the brightening flame of love, and the triumphs of invigorated faith! With what a smile, and a holy, hearty welcome do they greet the believer's spirit, whether it rise to their company from the bed of sickness, or amidst the flames of martyrdom! Strange that their observation of us, and interest in us should be so little pondered!

On the morning of the day that Richard Hooker died, Dr. Saravia, finding him in deep meditation, inquired what the subject of his thoughts was, to which he replied, "I am meditating on the number and nature of angels, and their blessed obedience and order, without which peace could not be in heaven; and Oh that it might be so on earth!" Walter, the successor of John Eliot, was somewhat similarly occupied when he exclaimed, "Angels, do your office." And with what satisfaction must departed saints find themselves

united to that glorious community! forever associating with Cherubim and Seraphim, becoming acquainted with all in the numberless catalogue, and hearing from their lips with what means and with what feelings they served and observed the Church militant!

Growth in sacred knowledge will thus be efficiently promoted. When such intellects as those of unfallen angels, with memories that are never treacherous, with imaginations that never beguile, with judgments which prejudice never blinds, and into which no fallacies intrude — when such intellects have expanded age after age, to what gigantic dimensions must they attain!

What treasures of knowledge must these sleepless students amass! They know nothing of fatigue. All eye, all ear, they perform their errands, century after century; and never detained by the acquisition of new languages, never disheartened by misapplied labor, never retarded by sickness, poverty, or incompetent instruction, they observe and ponder, they analyse and discuss with unerring acumen and immortal energy. Their stores too, are forever secure; old age cannot touch them; fire will never reach the archives of the city of God. Now, in such society and with such instructors, what must be the progress of redeemed souls!

Corresponding advantage will be realized in the point of moral excellence. All the studies and occupations of angels serve to augment their attainments in holiness. It was not without the most ennobling influence to themselves that they ministered to the Son of God while he tabernacled in the flesh, that they attended him back to their abode, and have since been drinking in the beams of his glory! They imbibe holy ardor and vigor from all their errands to this world, whether of mercy or of judgment. Unsullied by scenes of wickedness witnessed here, they spread their wings with new alacrity for heaven. Carnal desires find no lodgment in their bosoms. There was no need that they should be washed in the fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for they have bathed for ages in the river of the water of life, clear as crystal. What then must be the influence of such society upon the spirits of just men made perfect?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WHERE IS HE ?

Be warned ! Thou canst not break or 'scape the power
In kindness given in thy first breathing hour :
Thou canst not slay its life : it must create ;
And, good or ill, there ne'er will come a date
To its tremendous energies. The trust,
Thus given, guard, and to thyself be just,
Nor dream with life to shuffle off this coil ;
It takes fresh life, starts fresh for further toil,
And on it goes, forever, ever on,
Changing, all down its course, each thing to one
With its immortal nature. All must be
Like thy dread self, one dread eternity.

Dana.

WHEN the progenitors of our race saw the sun sink for the first time beneath the horizon, it must have been with a measure of sadness and anxiety ; but after a few hours the King of day returned in all his glory and cheerfulness. Though the race of flowers fall before the cythe, or the frosts of Autumn, we look with the return of Spring to see them stand up again as fresh and beautiful as before. Birds of passage come back as sportive and tuneful as ever.

It is not long before the ebbing tide flows again. But when we look at the remains of extinct species of animals, or when we see the island that had just emerged from the sea, sink never to appear again, or when a once familiar star—the lost Pleiad or some other—has vanished from his place in the heavens and never reappears, we feel no profound interest in the event. The age or the scene is too remote to awaken any powerful emotions. When, however, a fellow being wastes away under our eye—when man giveth up the ghost, we inquire eagerly, Where is he?

He is not here; he is gone. We speak to the familiar form before us, but receive no answer; we go from room to room, but do not find him; we mingle with the throng in the market place or the sanctuary, but do not meet him. Opening the volume of history, we learn that hundreds of generations, each with its many millions, have previously wasted from the earth. We wander up and down amidst fallen arches, columns, and obelisks; we thread our way amidst the ruins of Persepolis, Thebes, and Carthage; we enter vast excavations in solid rock; we climb the pyramids, in search of the multitudes concerned in planning and executing them; we everywhere cry aloud, Where

are they? and everywhere does a hollow echo mock us.

The lifeless body before us we do not acknowledge to be our friend. He was wont to reply when spoken to; his eye beamed with intelligence; there was a warm heart beating in his breast. That body, cold, speechless, motionless, we cannot recognize as the being with whom we have held converse. This, it appears, is the mere tabernacle he once occupied; the moving tent which he pitched here and there as convenience suited; but having never seen him except when thus at home in the body, we had not sufficiently distinguished between him and the house he lived in. This, we now find was only his temporary tenement; and a dear rent did he pay; *Galba male habitat*. Repairs, were needed daily; the irresistible decays and derangements occasioned untold anxiety and sufferings; but the dwelling and he who dwelt in it, we learn were not the same. Even Socrates himself could say to his friends; "Is it not strange, after all I have said to convince you that I am going to the society of the happy, that Crito still thinks this body, which will soon be a lifeless corpse, to be Socrates? Let him dispose of my body as he pleases, but let him not at its interment, mourn over it as if it were Socrates."

Among the Montenegrins, just before the corpse is removed from the house for burial, the relations whisper in the ear of the deceased, and give commissions for their friends in the other world. On the way to the place of interment, a variety of questions are asked, interrupted by sobs, as, Why he quit them? Why he abandoned his family? — he whose poor wife loved him so tenderly; whose children obeyed him with such respect; while his friends succored him whenever he wanted assistance; who possessed such beautiful flocks, and all whose undertakings were blessed by heaven? But a departure has taken place; the man is not upon the bier; it is the funeral of the body, not of the soul that is attended.

Where is he? Our friend is not in the grave. It is his remains that we follow to the narrow house appointed for all living; and though our thoughts often return to that spot, and linger there, he is not there. Dust returns to earth as it was, but where is the spirit? We impose upon ourselves by calling this state sleep: for of all that was mortal it is death. Poetry will indeed tell us — and our hearts heave at the recital — that of a household,

“ One midst the forests of the West,
By a dark stream is laid, —

The Indian knows his place of rest,
Far in the cedar shade."

"The sea, the blue, lone sea, hath one,
He lies where pearls lie deep, —
He was the loved of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep."

"One sleeps where Southern vines are drest,
Above the noble slain;
He wrapt his colors round his breast,
On a blood-red field of Spain."

"And one — o'er her the myrtle showers
Its leaves, by soft winds fanned;
She faded midst Italian flowers,
The last of that bright band."

"And parted thus, they rest, who played
Beneath the same green tree;
Whose voices mingled as they prayed
Around one parent knee!"

No, they are not in those scattered graves.
If they had been so many automata, if parental
hearts had yearned over so many pieces of curi-
ous, yet mere mechanism; then all this would
be literal truth, and poetic piety would be the
only piety. But a rough hand must sometimes
be laid upon flowers with which that sorceress
would amuse and mislead us. Church and
church yard religion are two things.

Nothing is here implied adverse to a legiti-

mate attachment to places of burial. In providing for the mortal remains of ourselves and our friends, ample and tasteful arrangements should be made. While everything like monumental ostentation is banished, each tomb and grass-plot should display a delicate and painstaking regard to the proprieties of the spot, and the cemetery, in its whole aspect, serve to foster serious reflections. What a mighty argument for social concord do such enclosures as Pere la Chaise, Laurel Hill, Greenwood, Mount Auburn, and Forest Hills present? The rich and the poor meet together. The place of burial also, often kindles patriotism to a flame. "You shall see how we will fight," said the Scythians, "when we come to the graves of our fathers." Many a Bozaris has cheered his band with the appeal —

"Strike — till the last armed foe expires ;
Strike — for your altars and your fires —
Strike — for the green graves of your sires —
God — and your native land."

Who is not touched with the dying patriarch's attachment to Macpelah? "I am to be gathered unto my people; bury me with my fathers, in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of

Macpelah, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite, for a possession of a burial-place. There they buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebecca his wife; and there I buried Leah." So too felt the aged Barzillai; "I am this day four score years old; and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother."

But while we honor this feeling, we honor yet more any laudable sentiment which overpowers it. Reference is not now intended so much to cases like that of Bruce, who bequeathed his heart to Douglas to be borne to Jerusalem for deposit; or to that of Alaric, who had the river Bucento turned from its channel that he might be interred in its bed, over which the stream would flow again; but to cases where the patriot, and yet more the philanthropist and Christian, nobly disregards all thoughts of the kind in his devotion to higher aims. This we see in the Marquis of Montrose, when condemned to have his limbs nailed to the gates of

four cities; he declared he was sorry he had not limbs sufficient to be nailed to all the gates of the cities of Europe, as monuments of his loyalty. Schilik, a Bohemian nobleman and martyr, being told that he was to be quartered, and his parts scattered in different places smiled with great serenity, and said, "The loss of a sepulchre is but a trifling consideration."

There is a certain poetic materialism, very common and very absurd

"Green be the turf above thee,
Friend of my better days" —

sighs one ;

"Light lie the turf above thee" —

cries another ; and we hear everlasting ditties about the cold, cold grave, — as if the decaying corpse were still conscious ; as if the mere body were all that ever belonged to that thinking, feeling agent ; as if Christianity had left the human mind in a darkness no less deplorable than paganism itself. The emperor Severus, calling for the urn, which was soon to receive his ashes, moralized thus : "Little urn, thou shalt now contain what the world could not contain." *Torquati Tassi ossa*, — such is the truthful epitaph of the prince of Italian poets. Not the

bard, but his bones repose in that tomb. "Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

But man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? He has not ceased to exist. The thought of passing into nothingness is too abhorrent to reason, and to the predominant convictions of mankind, to be entertained for a moment. True, more than one ancient philosopher composed works to prove that the soul is mortal; some maintaining, for instance, that it is a mere quality, like the harmony of a musical instrument, which vanishes when the body is dissolved. Atheists, of course, hold substantially the same. There is not, however, usually more than one Anacharsis Clootz in a single generation. He, to be sure, could declare that "fools alone believe in a Supreme Being," and on his way to execution, could lecture Herbert on materialism, "to prevent him from yielding to religious feelings in his last moments." Cotton Mather says he knew a man in Boston, who denied the immortality of the soul, and went about debauching others with the vile opinion that we have no immortal soul in us, but when he came to die, his out-cries were; "Oh, what shall I do for my immortal soul! What will become of my immortal soul forever!"

Those who have persevered in the belief of annihilation make up, all told, but a miserable fraction of the race. It has been only by desperate violence to the obvious suggestions of the inner man, to the clearest analogies, and to the most imperative demands of our moral nature. Any mind, except the peculiarly perverted and debauched, must revolt at the thought of extinction. It is only by intrepid effrontery toward common sense that a man can bring himself to affirm that the wonderful phenomena of thought and feeling are mere functions of the brain, — simple results of organization. Independently of that volume, which authoritatively determines this question, it seems certain to us that there is something within which passes out, and whose locality and operations need have no dependence upon the body.

We approach a well-known house. A change has taken place ; it stands empty ; no foot-fall, no familiar good night or good morning do we hear ; the cheerful lamp is not lighted. We knock, and a hollow reverberation alone tells us there is no one there. But has our friend therefore perished ? He has only removed ; only changed the place of his residence. Was Paul lost by leaving the ship ? Does the commander

perish because he retreats from an untenable fortress ?

Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ? Not absorbed into the universal spirit. At the time of his death, Plotinus remarked ; " The divine principle within me is now hastening to unite itself with that divine being which animates the universe." The ancient pantheists were accustomed to represent the soul as a ray proceeding from the great central-luminary, and as eternal as that luminary itself ; or, as a portion separated briefly from the great ocean of being ; and when it escapes from this frail vessel the body, mingles again with its kindred element. Nor is that, for substance, an ancient idea exclusively. It is comparatively of small moment what a few Grecian philosophers once believed ; or what notions may be entertained by a portion of the literati of modern Germany, or by a handful of transcendentalists in this country ; but it is a point of profound interest to us, what is now the belief upon this point, of more than a hundred millions in India, and what has been the prevailing belief there for more than three thousand years. And what is the deluded Hindoo's desire ? His highest hope is to become at length lost forever as an individual in the all pervading essence of Bra-

ma. A self-oblivion, an extinction of all separate consciousness, he regards as the supreme felicity. Miserable being! Were the object of his desires attainable, it would be an appalling catastrophe. To be engulfed thus, if it were possible, in a perpetual, personal unconsciousness, would be second only to endless sufferings.

Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? Not in a process of transmigration — not occupying successively the bodies of various animals. This was a doctrine of the Egyptians, of Pythagoras, and his disciples, and of many other ancients, and of multitudes now, who hold to the opinion just stated, and regard this passage from one body to another, as preparatory to ultimate absorption into the divine essence. Many of them, however, do not rise to the wretched consolation even of this absurd theory. A Hindoo was lying upon his bed, expecting soon to die, and thinking anxiously where his soul would go after death, when a priest called, and the dying man said, "What will become of me?" "O," said the priest, "you will live in another body." "And where shall I go then?" he asked, "Into another." "And where then?" "Into another, and so on through thousands of millions of years." The dying man, still un-

satisfied, cried, "Where shall I go last of all?" The priest could make no reply, and the unhappy idolater died with his question unsolved.

Yea, man giveth up the ghost and where is he? Not in a state of temporary unconsciousness, or semi-consciousness. The emperor Adrian, when expiring, composed these lines :

"Ah ! fleeting spirit, wandering fire,
That long hast warmed my tender breast,
Wilt thou no more my frame inspire ?
No more a pleasing, cheerful guest ?
Whither, ah ! whither art thou flying ?
To what dark, undiscovered shore ?
Thou seem'st all trembling, shivering, dying,
And wit and humor are no more."

But it is no indefinite region, a region of shadows or of utter vacuity, to which the soul passes at death. We do not pronounce that transition "a leap in the dark." We do not speak of the intermediate state as a sleep,—the long, dreamless sleep. We remember how Moses and Elias appeared suddenly on the mount of transfiguration ; we remember what our Lord said to his penitent companion in crucifixion—"To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;" we remember that when the beggar died, he was carried by angels into

Abraham's bosom ; and we are also assured that for the believer to be present in the body, is to be absent from the Lord.

Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ? He is in the world of spirits. Passing from the body and from earth, he has entered the great Hades—the vast rendezvous of departed souls. We do not consider him as having anything more to do with terrestrial concerns ; as lingering around the tenement just left, or the home now desolate to survivors ; or as hovering in mid air, and floating about in ærial excursions. Madame de Staël relates that some hours after her mother's death, she entered her chamber, the windows of which were opened on a magnificent view of the Alps, illumined by the morning sun. " Perhaps her soul," said Necker, the weeping husband, " Perhaps her soul hovers there !" pointing to a slight cloud that passed over the horizon. He had as much reason for that supposition, as children have for imagining they see castles, mountains, kings, knights, and patriarchs in the clouds.

Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ? In heaven or hell. One moment he is here, the next, there. The believing prayer, " Lord Jesus, receive my spirit !" is never breathed in vain. For the Christian to die, was, in the

estimation of Paul, Peter, and John, the same as to be with Christ. All that John Schultis, a Bohemian witness for Christ, said before his martyrdom, was, "The righteous seem in the eye of fools to die, but they only go to rest. Lord Jesus! thou hast promised that those who come to thee shall not be cast out. Behold, I am come; look on me, pity me, pardon my sins, and receive my soul."

But is it to be with Christ, that all who leave the world, go hence? Fain would friendship, and party, and sect, so interpret the word and administration of God, with respect to all, at least within their respective circles. The Rabbis teach that however wicked a descendant of Abraham may be, he will, by virtue of that patriarch's merits, escape future punishment. One of their most familiar maxims is, "All Israel hath part in eternal life." The Romish priest is accustomed, in his formula, to send to heaven, even the pirate, at his execution. Out of the church no salvation; in it no condemnation—is a very brief and intelligible creed. Yet many a Roman Catholic cries out, as did Cardinal Mazarine, at the prospect of dissolution, "Oh, my poor soul, what will become of thee; whither wilt thou go?"

There may be instances in which a pusillanimous orthodoxy seems to quiver and yield before the tide of funeral grief: but does the Holy One of Israel accomodate his law and his determination to the tears of surviving relatives? Whosoever is not found written in the book of life, is cast into the lake of fire. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha. Terrible as this reality may seem, and much as we may struggle against the admission of it with respect to our friends or ourselves, it is none the less certain. If it be not so, there is no truth in the Bible, and no God on the throne.

Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? Where he will remain forever. He finds the character and design of his new state to be altogether different from that which he has just left. The disciplinary system has ceased; motives are no longer urged upon him; he hears no arguments. From the cessation of many former influences, from its translation out of that entire economy of trial, and from its new, unmingled emotions, the disembodied spirit must become irresistibly conscious that retribution has commenced. Not one word do we find in holy writ, authorizing the belief of a future probation, restoration, or annihilation of

the wicked, any more than of future condemnation of the righteous. Their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.

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